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SECRET MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF PETERSBURG:

PARTICULARLY TOWARDS THE END OF THE

REIGN OF CATHARINE II.

AND THE COMMENCEMENT OF THAT OF

PAUL I.

FORMING

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MANNERS OF PETERSBURG
AT THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,

AND CONTAINING

VARIOUS ANECDOTES,

COLLECTED DURING A RESIDENCE OF TEN YEARS IN THAT CAPITAL.

TOGETHER WITH REMARKS ON

THE EDUCATION OF THE GRAND-DUKES,

THE MANNERS OF THE LADIES, AND THE RELIGION OF THE PEOPLE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SARAVAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL'S LIBRARY

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
Dean Street, Fetter Lane,
FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1800.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Publiſhers of the following Tranſlation have been induced, by a ſenſe of decency and propriety, to ſuppreſs or ſoften a few anecdotes contained in the original, the groſſneſs of which would undoubtedly outrage the public and private feelings of Engliſhmen. In all other reſpects, the grand deſign, and the true colouring and ſhade of this intereſting picture of the Semiramis of the North have been faithfully preſerved. The lovers of biography will, it is hoped, now receive an unqualified gratification from the peruſal of the following ſheets; in which, not only the portrait of the principal perſonage is drawn by the hand of a maſter, but the delineations of the various characters connected with her hiſtory will be found marked by a ſuperior

degree of knowledge and accuracy. The writer was well acquainted with the court, and was reſident in the capital, and near the perſon of the empreſs, during the laſt ten years of her reign. In this work are developed the frailties, prejudices, and paſſions, of a woman whoſe public character cannot perhaps be too much exalted: who, in ſpite of her faults as a woman, was, as an empreſs, the arbitreſs of the fate of millions, the achievements of whoſe reign excited the aſtoniſhment of Europe, and whoſe memory will claim the admiration, and in many inſtances, the gratitude, of poſterity.

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SECRET MEMOIRS,

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CHAP. I.

THE KING OF SWEDEN'S VISIT TO PETERSBURG.

Anecdotes reſpecting the marriage projected between him and the grand-ducheſs Alexandra—Portrait of the king, and of the young princeſs—Remarks on the failure of this match—German princeſſes ſent for to Ruſſia—Marriage of the grand-dukes, account of their brides, and pomp of the court at that period.

THE peace of Varela having reconciled Catharine and Guſtavus, their conduct and attention towards each other formed a ſingular contraſt with the hatred,

animosity, and invectives in which they had so profusely indulged during the war. The officers of the two nations were equally eager to display the esteem with which they had mutually inspired each other; for, the *Cossackines* of * Denisof excepted, this war was carried on in a manner very different from what was usual with the Russians: in the Swedes they found enemies, whose urbanity was equal to their valour; and the well-educated Russ, while he piques himself on the possession of these qualities, esteems them in others.

Count Stackelberg, so famous for his embassy, or rather his reign in Poland, was sent into Sweden; and Catharine,

* A Cossack general, who distinguished himself by his barbarity and ravages in the war in Finland. It is the same, or his nephew, who commands the corps of Don Cossacks marching into Germany. He is an ignorant man, but a resolute soldier and determined gambler.

who

who could not live in peace with her neighbours unless they were subject to her sway, or at least at her devotion, sought new means of re-establishing her interest in that country, which the talents and firmness of Gustavus had destroyed. To marry one of the young grand-duchesses to the prince-royal then became her favourite project; and it is even said that this matrimonial alliance was a secret article in the treaty of peace. This at least is certain, that the grand-duchess Alexandra was educated and trained up to the expectation of being one day queen of Sweden; while every person about her confirmed her in the idea, and entertained her with the charms and early ripening accomplishments of the young Gustavus. Even the empress herself frequently jested with her upon the subject. One day she opened a port-folio containing portraits of several unmarried princes, and pressed her to point out which of them

ſhe ſhould like beſt for a huſband. The child, bluſhing, choſe the portrait of him of whom ſhe had heard ſo many fine things, and who was already the lover of her riſing imagination. The good old lady, not conſidering that her grand-daughter could read, and knew the prince of Sweden by his name at the bottom of the picture, perſuaded herſelf that ſympathy had decided in his favour, and purſued her ſcheme with additional pleaſure.

It is equally certain, that ſeveral perſons about the young Guſtavus endeavoured to inſpire his heart with ſimilar ſentiments; but I know not whether the king his father, abſolute and deſpotic as he was, would have given his conſent to the match, as ſuitable to the young lovers, as it would be the reverſe to the two countries. Be this as it may, the violent and ſudden death of Guſtavus fruſtrated the ſchemes of Catharine, whoſe

design had been no less than to send him at the head of his Swedes into France, there to act the same part as Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. had done in Germany and Poland, in the hope that he would there meet with a similar fate; while she prepared for that of regent over the minority of an orphan king in Sweden, whom, together with his kingdom, she would have taken under her maternal care.

But the duke of Sudermania, having seized the reins of government during the minority of his nephew, displayed sentiments diametrically opposite to the Russian system. Less gallant than his brother, he did not feel himself disposed to sacrifice his country to the ladies; and failed not to repay, with reciprocal sentiments, the hatred which Catharine had conceived for him during the war, when the noise of his cannon had reached the inmost recesses of the palace of the tzars.

This

This naval war, in which however he had little reaſon to boaſt of his ſucceſs, had irritated him againſt the Ruſſians; and he was not ignorant of the raillery and invective which were liberally beſtowed on him at the court of Peterſburg, or that plays were even acted at the Hermitage, in which he was held up as an object of ridicule.

The vileſt corruption, the baſeſt and moſt cowardly intrigues, were employed againſt him. Europe even ſaw, with freſh horror, a woman, who pretended to be an image of God adored on the throne, exciting revolt in a nation, buying traitors, and paying—aſſaſſins. To remove the regent, ſubſtitute a council of her creatures in his ſtead, and harneſs Sweden to her chariot by the ſide of Poland, were the objects at which ſhe aimed, and which ſhe ſought to attain by all the means that could be deviſed. Stackelberg, whose wit and urbanity had

charmed

charmed the king *, and who, to uſe his own words, found in that prince *a true and worthy knight of his immortal ſovereign*, demanded to be recalled. His haughtineſs could not ſtoop to act a part of little conſequence with the regent of a young king, after having himſelf been ſo long regent of an old king of Poland.

M. Romanzof, brother of him who was ſo well known and eſteemed in Germany, ſucceeded him; but, notwithſtanding

* Of all the miniſters employed by Catharine, count Stackelberg has the moſt wit and the moſt pride; and this he diſplayed particularly in Poland. M. von Thugut being ſent to that country by the emperor, when he was to have his audience of Poniatofski, was introduced into a ſaloon, where, ſeeing a man gravely ſeated, and ſurrounded by Poliſh lords reſpectfully ſtanding before him, he took him for the king, and began his complimentary ſpeech. It was Stackelberg, who was in no hurry to ſet him right. Thugut, informed of his miſtake, was vexed and aſhamed. In the evening, being at cards with the king and Stackelberg, he played a card, ſaying, "The king of "clubs."—"You are wrong," ſaid the king, "it is "the knave." The Auſtrian ambaſſador, pretending to have been miſtaken, anſwered, ſlapping his forehead,

ing his ingenuity, his inſtructions were too glaring and treacherous for him to acquire ſimilar reſpect in Sweden. The plots and intrigues of which the regent complained, ſoon required his recal. Who has not felt indignation at the impudence with which Armfeldt was ſet on, protected, and defended by Ruſſia, in ſpite of the obvious proofs of his attempts, and the moſt forcible claims? At the very time when all the kings in Europe ſeemed to make a common cauſe to hunt in concert every man who was

head, "Ah, ſire, pardon me; this is the ſecond time "to-day I have taken a knave for a king." Stackelberg, ready as he was at repartee, could only bite his lips. When he returned from Sweden, his time was ſpent loitering in the antichambers of Zubof. He was always one in Catharine's little parties, however, and was thus reduced to amuſe, after having ſerved her. His great humiliation no doubt was that of being named by Paul lord of the bed-chamber in waiting to the very king of Poland who had frequently danced attendance in his anti-chamber at Warſaw. In this malicious appointment of the emperor there was ſomething ingenious and noble that does him honour.

barely

barely ſuſpected of rebellion, a regent of Sweden in vain demanded, from court to court, a man who had conſpired againſt his life and the government of his country, which he would have ſold and delivered to a foreign power. From court to court his demands were evaded in an inſulting manner; and Armfeldt at length retired to Ruſſia to ſet him at defiance, being allowed to appear at court, receiving a penſion, and living there even during the viſit of the king and the regent *.

I ſhall not trace this plot, which ſo long engaged the court of Sweden, through all its ramifications, or name all the agents who were ſtill employed to carry it on; but Catharine did not relinguiſh her deſign of ruling there, of acting the part of protectreſs to the young king, and of exhibiting the regent as a tyrant who abuſed the

* In 1798 he was at Carlſbad, worn out with infirmities, and deſpiſed by all that knew him.

minority

minority of his nephew, or a jacobin who intended to imitate the duke of Orleans. She even ſent the king an invitation to come and put himſelf under her protection, or at leaſt to pay her a viſit; and nothing was left untried to get him to Peterſburg without his uncle. It is ſurpriſing that the regent was not driven to extremities. Among the papers of the accomplices of Armfeldt were found ſeveral which would have made Catharine appear deſpicable in the eyes of all Europe; but he did not make them public:—was it from fear, weakneſs, or moderation?

He was at the point, however, of entering into an alliance with France, which to him ſeemed the moſt effectual ſtep towards ſecuring the independence of Sweden againſt the unbounded ambition of a powerful neighbour; concluding, that whatever connections might be formed between Sweden and Ruſſia, excited

by

by private paſſions or temporary intereſts, would ſtill prove injurious to the former.

To ſtrike at the root of Catharine's hopes, the regent took another ſtep, which was ſtill more ſenſibly felt. He demanded in marriage for his young pupil one of the princeſſes of Mecklenburg, who was ſolemnly betrothed to him, and the match was announced in form to all the courts of Europe. Count Schverin, who had already been in Ruſſia, where his perſon had gained him many friends among the ladies, was diſpatched to Peterſburg with this commiſſion; but at Viborg he found an order from the empreſs, which forbad him to make his appearance at court. This was certainly ſtrange conduct, and diſplays rather the pique of an irritated woman than the reſerve of a ſovereign. What! becauſe the king of Sweden had eſpouſed another princeſs inſtead

of

of her grand-daughter, ſhe refuſed to receive the notification conformably to eſtabliſhed cuſtom! A forſaken miſtreſs, who paid no regard to decorum, and was deſtitute of true pride, could have done no more. The reſpect ſhe owed herſelf, her ſex, and above all her amiable grand-daughter, ſhould at leaſt have ſaved her from the humiliation of thus publiſhing her chagrin. On this occaſion ſhe ceaſed to act the part of the *great Catharine**.

To account for this ſtep, no leſs inſulting than indelicate, ſhe directed her *chargé des affaires*, or rather *d'intrigues*, at Stockholm, to deliver to the regent that note which has been read with aſtoniſhment in ſome of the public papers, where ſhe not only made the duke of Sudermania's maintaining the connexion be-

* The Ruſſians have aggrandized even her name; they ſay, in their language, *Yekatarina*, which can only be tranſlated *Arch-Catharine*.

tween

tween Sweden and France a crime of *treaſon to her imperial majeſty*, but even ſeems to inſinuate, that he was privy to the aſſaſſination of the king his brother, the avenging of which ſhe claims to herſelf. The vexation of Catharine, and folly of her miniſters, went ſtill further. Every thing announced, that they were about to treat the king of Sweden like Sganarelle*, by obliging him at the cannon's mouth to break his engagement to the princeſs of Mecklenburg, and marry the grand-dutcheſs Alexandra †. The amiable qualities of

* In *L'Amour Medicin* of Moliere.—*T.*

† Some planks were laid at that time with great noiſe and preparation on the ice of the Neva, ſtrong enough then to bear caſtles, to facilitate, as was ſaid, the paſſage of the artillery which was going to be ſent into Finland. The miniſters and generals talked publicly of the approaching war; a proof, that it was all a deception: but whether M. Steding were a dupe to it, I do not pretend to ſay. Prince George Dolgoruky, a general too honeſt and too little of a courtier to be employed by the favourites, was even ſent to the frontiers by way of ſcarecrow.

this

this princeſs would have juſtified a young king in fighting to obtain her hand rather than to eſcape it. A report was alſo ſpread, that the king was already enamoured of her; that his uncle had done violence to his inclinations; and that he wiſhed for nothing more than to defer his marriage with the princeſs of Mecklenburg till he became of age, that he might then declare in favour of the other lady who aſpired to his hand.

There is no doubt, that ſeveral Swedes, gained over by the promiſes of Catharine, and by the hopes they had formed from the munificence of that oſtentatious princeſs, endeavoured to inſpire the young king with ſuch reſolutions, and to excite in his heart the ſame paſſion, as had been raiſed in that of the amiable Alexandra. A regular correſpondence was even kept up between Schverin, Steinbach, and ſome perſons who had acceſs to the grand-ducheſſes; and ſeveral of the letters were ſhewn

ſhewn to the empreſs through the medium of madame Budberg, chief governeſs to the princeſſes.

After ſuch violent proceedings againſt the regent, who could expect to ſee him bend, and ſubmit? This, however, he did: at leaſt he ſuffered himſelf to be either frightened or bribed*. M. Budberg, who had juſt made the tour of Germany to

* A Geneveſe, of the name of Chriſtian, formerly the right hand and ſecretary to Calonne, being at Stockholm, introduced himſelf to the regent by means of a fable, which he compoſed in his praiſe. As he had been at Peterſburg, he talked to him a great deal of Catharine, of the young princeſſes, of the eſteem in which he was held at that court, and of the advantage of an alliance with Ruſſia, by marrying the king to the grand-ducheſs. Being perſuaded from the duke's anſwers, that he was not very averſe to a reconciliation with Catharine, he ſent information of it to La Huſs, Markof's miſtreſs; and upon theſe grounds the negotiations which had been broken off were renewed. Chriſtian returned to Peterſburg, to reap the rewards of his addreſs; but the death of the empreſs deprived him of the recompenſe he expected.

find

find a wife for the grand-duke Conſtantine, having brought with him the princeſs of Cobourg and her three daughters, was deemed capable of ſurmounting the difficulties experienced in obtaining a huſband for the young grand-ducheſs. At firſt he repaired to Mecklenburg, to negociate a renunciation; and was then ſent to Stockholm as an ambaſſador. Threats, promiſes, and money at length prevailed: Catharine obtained the point of the king's marriage being deferred till he ſhould be of age; and the regent, willing, no doubt, to ſhew that his pupil was free in his choice and in his conduct, at length conſented to make a journey, whither he was ſo kindly invited. The affair of the marriage, which was the true motive of this invitation, was touched but ſlightly, ſentimentally.—*If, as they ſay, the two children love each other already; if, when they ſee each other, they ſhould ſtill prove mutually*

tually agreeable; we will consider of the means of rendering them happy. Such was the language of the empreſs. If ſhe could get the king to her court, Catharine thought ſhe ſhould have the game in her own hands. Reckoning on the charms of the princeſs, and the kindneſſes which ſhe herſelf ſhould laviſh on the king, the regent, and their ſuite, ſhe doubted not but the young Guſtavus, after having ſeen her whom he had ventured to refuſe for reaſons of ſtate, would give both the kingdom and the glory of Charles XII. to poſſeſs ſuch a bride.

On the 25th of Auguſt 1796, he arrived at Peterſburg with his uncle and a numerous ſuite; and alighted at the houſe of M. Steding, his ambaſſador. All the city was anxious to ſee the young monarch. The empreſs, who was at her palace of Tauris*, came to that of the Hermitage

* The empreſs had purchaſed Tauris, the principal palace of Potemkin; and in honour to the memory of this

Hermitage to receive him, and give him entertainments. At their firſt interview ſhe appeared enchanted, and *almoſt in love with him herſelf**. He would have kiſſed her hand; but ſhe would not allow it, ſaying, "No, I cannot forget that the "count von Haga is a king."—"If your "majeſty," anſwered he, "will not give "me permiſſion as empreſs, at leaſt al-"low me as a lady, to whom I owe ſo "much reſpect and admiration."

The interview with the young princeſs was ſtill more intereſting. Both were extremely embarraſſed; and the eyes of all the court being turned towards them,

this celebrated favourite, whom ſhe regretted, ſhe gave his ſurname to this palace, where ſhe reſided in the ſpring and autumn. It is at Peterſburg, a ſhort league (a mile and two thirds) from the winter palace, and like it ſituated on the banks of the Neva. It was in this ſuperb edifice, that Potemkin gave his ſovereign that magnificent and ſo much celebrated entertainment in 1791.

* Theſe were her very words.

their

their confuſion increaſed. No doubt each found the other worthy of the ſentiments with which they had been inſpired from infancy; and there is reaſon to believe, that, if motives of ſtate on the part of the king of Sweden, or the whims of the preſent emperor, prevent not the match from being brought to a concluſion, the moſt charming of princeſſes will be likewiſe the moſt unhappy.

No one, however, has more claims to happineſs than Alexandra Pavlovna. At fourteen ſhe was already tall and womanly: her figure was noble and majeſtic, ſoftened by all the graces of her ſex and age: her features were regular, and her complexion fair as alabaſter: innocence, candour, and ſerenity, ſtamped their divine impreſſions on her brow; and light flaxen hair, which ſeemed always arranged by fairy hands, fell in ringlets on her well-turned neck. Her heart, her talents, and her intellect, were in uniſon

with her exterior appearance. Miſs Willamof, her private governeſs, had cultivated the nobleſt and pureſt ſentiments in her mind. Exquiſite ſenſibility, judgment, and underſtanding, diſtinguiſhed her infancy, and excited the admiration of all who came near her.

It was difficult to find, I will not ſay a king, but a young man, more intereſting, better educated, and of ſo great promiſe as the king of Sweden. He was ſeventeen years of age, tall and finely ſhaped, with an air of nobleneſs, intelligence, and mildneſs: yet there was ſomething of grandeur and ſtatelineſs about him, notwithſtanding his age; and he had all the graces of youth, without the awkwardneſs that uſually attends it. His manners were ſimple, though courteous and polite. Whatever he ſaid was ſpoken with reflection. To ſerious things he paid an attention not expected from youth: he diſplayed knowledge, that announced a very

careful

careful education: and a certain gravity, that beſpoke his rank, never forſook him. All the pomp of the Ruſſian empire, which was ſeduloufly exhibited to his view, ſeemed in nowiſe to dazzle him. In that brilliant and numerous court, he ſoon appeared more at eaſe than the grand-dukes themſelves, who knew not how to converſe with any perſon; ſo that both court and city ſoon drew compariſons between them very flattering to the young ſtranger. The empreſs herſelf could not conceal the pain ſhe felt at the diſparity between him and the ſecond of her grand-children, whoſe brutal and rude boyiſh tricks offended her to ſuch a degree, that ſhe put him under arreſt once or twice during the ſtay of the king of Sweden *.

All

* On ſeveral occaſions, when the king appeared in public with the grand-dukes, foreigners were ſhocked, and the honeſt Ruſſians humbled, at the courtly demeanour of the former, contraſted with the ruſtic behaviour of the latter. At a re-

view

All the great men of the empire were eager to participate in the joy of Catharine, who selected such as should give entertainments to her young guest, and fixed the days. Counts Stroganof, Ostermann, Besborodko, and Samoilof, distinguished themselves by the sums they expended, and the magnificence they displayed. The courtiers sought to surpass each other in the richness of their dress, and the generals in the military spectacles which they exerted themselves in exhibiting to the king. The old general Melissino particularly distinguished himself by

view of the corps of cadets of the artillery, where the young Gustavus appeared attentive to every thing most worthy of notice, conversing with the generals around him, and with the grand-duke Alexander, who was appointed to do the honours of the empire, the grand-duke Constantine was running and bawling behind the soldiers, imitating them in a burlesque manner, threatening them, and even beating them. It is certain, that the king of Sweden left Petersburg as well acquainted with the city, as those who were one day to reign there.

the

the manœuvres and artificial fireworks executed and played off under his direction. Guſtavus was in a ſtate of continual enchantment; yet he wiſely employed his mornings in traverſing the city on foot with the regent, and ſeeing every thing that could be intereſting or inſtructive. Everywhere he put ſuch queſtions, or gave ſuch anſwers, as ſhewed the underſtanding he poſſeſſed, and the education he had received.

The regent, who appeared to enjoy the honour of his labour in the approbation beſtowed on his pupil, is a very little man. His manners are eaſy and poliſhed; he has an air of acuteneſs and obſervation; his eyes are ſparkling and full of fire; everything he ſays diſplays the man of underſtanding, and excites reflection in thoſe who hear him.

It may readily be ſuppoſed, that during this ſucceſſion of entertainments, the two lovers had frequent opportunities of ſeeing

each other, converſing and dancing together: they became familiar, and appeared mutually enchanted. The aged Catharine aſſumed an appearance of youth, and again indulged in thoſe ſcenes of joy and pleaſure which ſhe had long ſince renounced. The approaching marriage was no longer a ſecret; it was the common topic of converſation. The empreſs already ſpoke to the young king and her grand-daughter as betrothed lovers, and encouraged them to mutual affection. One day ſhe made them give the *firſt kiſs of love* in her preſence: the firſt, no doubt, that the virgin lips of the young princeſs ever received; and which may have left a pleaſing and cheriſhed impreſſion, that will long render her unhappy.

In the meantime ſteps were taking to bring this deſired match to a concluſion. The only difficulty which preſented itſelf, was that of religion. Catharine had felt the pulſe of her court on this ſubject; and

and even consulted the archbishop, to know, whether her grand-daughter might abjure the orthodox faith. Instead of answering in the way in which she flattered herself he would have done, he merely replied: "Your majesty is all powerful." The chief patriarch of Russia, not finding himself supported by the opinions of his clergy, whom he expected would be more tractable, was then desirous of appearing more Russian than the Russians themselves; and, to flatter the national pride, rather than from respect to the Greek church, resolved to make a queen of Sweden of the Greek religion. In proportion as this appeared new and humiliating to the Swedish nation in the eyes of the patriarch, the more flattering was it to his vanity, and that of his ministers: besides, the popes, chaplains, and others, whom it would place about the young queen, would be trusty persons, and well calculated to keep the princess in the

interests

interests of Russia. The king was enamoured, dazzled: the regent appeared to be completely gained: could it then be supposed that they would reject this arrangement, after such decisive steps had been taken? In the private conversations that had passed, this delicate subject had been but slightly touched upon: it was scarcely expected that Catharine would have any scruples; and the king had hinted, that, from respect to the Russian nation and the prejudices of the people, the princess should not be obliged to abjure the Greek religion in form. The empress, persuaded that there was no room for retreat, left to her favourite ministers Zubof and Markof the care of drawing up the contract conformably to her views. On the other hand, the Swedish ambassador demanded the princess in marriage, at an audience which was given him for the purpose of making the demand in form; and the day and

hour

hour on which the parties were to be publicly betrothed, were fixed.

This day, which was the 21ſt of September, expoſed the happy and imperious Catharine to the greateſt chagrin and humiliation ſhe had ever experienced. The whole court received orders to aſſemble in full dreſs in the apartment of the throne. The young princeſs, habited as a bride, and attended by her ſiſters, the grand-dukes and their wives, and all the ladies and gentlemen, with the grand-duke, father to the princeſs, and the grand-ducheſs, who came from Gatſhina to be preſent at the ceremony of betrothing their daughter, were aſſembled by ſeven o'clock in the evening. The empreſs herſelf arrived in all imaginable pomp. No one was wanting but the young bridegroom, whoſe tardineſs at firſt excited aſtoniſhment. The repeated going out and coming in of prince Zubof, and the impatience which the empreſs exhibited, ſoon excited the curioſity

fity and whifperings of the ladies. "What "is the matter? Is the king taken ill? "He is not very gallant, however:—How "could he dare thus to make the fove-"reign wait, in the apartment of her "very throne, and with all her court "affembled!" The king, however, expected like the fpoufe of the eleven thoufand virgins, did not appear.

The following was the occafion of this ftrange delay. The king was to have been at court at feven in the evening. At fix, the minifter Markof brought him the contract and the articles of alliance, which he had juft drawn up with Zubof. Guftavus having read them over, appeared greatly aftonifhed on finding they contained articles on which he had not agreed with the emprefs; and afked, whether it were from her that they were brought to him to fign*?

Markof

* Thefe articles were, that the princefs fhould have her private chapel and clergy in the royal palace, be-
fides

Markof answering in the affirmative, the king replied, that he could not possibly comply. He observed, that he would lay no restraint on the conscience of the princess; that she might profess her own religion in private, but he could not allow her either a chapel or priests in the palace: on the contrary, in public, and in all outward ceremonies, she must profess the religion of the country. The reader may conceive the surprize and embarrassment of Markof: he was obliged to take up his papers, and return to Zubof, to inform him that the king refused his signature. He soon after returned in the greatest agitation, to say, that the empress was already in the apartment of the throne, surrounded by all her court; that it was no longer possible to speak to her; that she waited for the king; and that he flattered himself he would

sides certain engagements into which the Swedes were to enter against France, which have been kept very secret.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI

not

not bring the affair to an open rupture, which would be an unheard-of inſult to his ſovereign, and to the whole empire. Beſborodko, and ſeveral others, arrived in ſucceſſion, exhorting, urging, praying the king to yield. All the Swedes who were called in inclined the ſame way. The regent contented himſelf with ſaying, that it depended on the king; drew him aſide, and took a turn round the room with him, appearing himſelf to preſs him, while ſpeaking to him in a low voice. The king anſwered aloud, "No, no, I will not; I cannot; I will "never ſign them!" He withſtood all the remonſtrances, all the importunities of the Ruſſian miniſters; and at length, vexed at the pertinacity with which they beſet him, he retired to his chamber, and faſtened the door, after giving again a clear and peremptory refuſal to ſign anything inconſiſtent with the laws of his country. The Ruſſian miniſters re-

mained ſtupified at the audacity of a boy, who dared thus reſiſt their ſovereign, and concerted how to break the cataſtrophe to her.

If the firmneſs which the young Guſtavus diſplayed on this occaſion were *his own*; if the ſolicitations which his counſellors appeared to make, were not feigned, he has given his nation a proof of the greateſt character, which cannot be too highly admired in a young prince of ſeventeen, whom, it might be expected, love alone would have been ſufficient to ſubdue. It is to be preſumed, however, for the honour of the regent, that the entreaties which he appeared to uſe with his nephew were inſincere; and that he wiſhed only to charge the obſtinacy of the king with a reſiſtance which would probably have drawn upon himſelf the immediate vengeance of Catharine. Moſt of the Swedes who attended Guſtavus were actually bribed or ſeduced: being

young

young courtiers, their expectations were highly raiſed on the wedding gifts, and they were much mortified at the diſappointment. Steding, the ambaſſador, had a difficult part to act: but M. Flemming publicly declared his ſentiments, by ſaying, that he would never adviſe the king to act contrary to the laws of his realm.

Theſe debates between the miniſters of the empreſs and the king continued till near ten o'clock. Catharine and her court were ſtill waiting: but at laſt it was neceſſary to inform her, that the affair was broken off. She roſe, attempted to ſpeak, but her tongue faltered; was like to faint; and even had a ſlight fit, the precurſor of that which carried her off a few weeks after. The empreſs withdrew, and the court was diſmiſſed, under pretence of a ſudden indiſpoſition of the king. Some were offended at the audacity of a petty king of Sweden: others blamed the impru-

dence

dence of the wiſe Catharine, who had ſo lightly expoſed herſelf to ſuch a ſcene; but the preſumption of Zubof and Markof, who had pretended to impoſe on the Swedes by their cunning, and who had thought of procuring a matrimonial contract to be ſigned without being read, was particularly cenſured.

The moſt intereſting victim was the amiable Alexandra. She had ſcarcely ſtrength to enter her apartment; and there, no longer able to reſtrain her tears, ſhe gave herſelf up, before her governeſſes and maids of honour, to a grief that affected all about her, and rendered her truly ill. The next day but one after this unexpected affair, was the birth-day of the grand-ducheſs Anne Feodorovna*: the etiquette of the court preſcribed a ball, but no perſon would dance. The

* The wife of the grand-duke Conſtantine, daughter of the prince of Saxe Cobourg.

king went to it however, and the empreſs alſo made her appearance for a moment, but did not ſpeak to him. Zubof did not even conceal his anger againſt the young monarch. Embarraſſment was viſible on every countenance. Alexandra, being ill, was not preſent. The king danced with the other princeſſes, converſed a moment with the grand-duke Alexander, and retired early, ſaluting every perſon with ſtill more politeneſs than uſual. This was the laſt time of his appearance at court.

Theſe public days of pomp and feſtivity were ſuddenly changed into thoſe of retirement and irkſomeneſs. Never were any ſo melancholy and unpleaſant ſpent by a king at a foreign court. Every perſon was ill, or pretended to be ſo. The intereſt that Alexandra had inſpired, and Guſtavus merited, ſoftened every heart in their favour. She was pitied, as the victim of vanity and folly:

he,

he, for being obliged to make a ſacrifice that muſt have coſt him ſo dear*. Execrations were openly beſtowed on Zubof and Markof. The conduct of the empreſs, who gave herſelf up to the moſt dreadful chagrin, appeared inexplicable. It is ſaid, that her humbled favourites took the liberty of hinting to her to uſe force with the young prince, who was in her power. She went and ſhut herſelf up a whole day, almoſt alone, in her palace of Tauris, under pretence of celebrating the foundation of her chapel, but in fact to conceal from the eyes of her court the trouble that afflicted her, and to conſult with her clergy and favourites on the embarraſſing ſituation in which ſhe fancied herſelf placed.

* He has ſince married the young princeſs Frederica of Baden, ſiſter of the grand-ducheſs Elizabeth. Notwithſtanding the charms of his young bride, it is ſuppoſed that he is not happy with her; and it is to be feared that Alexandra, who, it is ſaid, is to be married to an arch-duke of Auſtria, will not be more ſo.

Endeavours were made to bring the affair a little in train again. The king ſaw her ſtill in private, and the miniſters held ſeveral conferences. Guſtavus at length eluded the buſineſs, by declaring, that as he could not grant what the empreſs deſired according to the laws of Sweden, he would refer the matter to the different eſtates that would be aſſembled at his coming of age; and if the eſtates conſented to have a queen of the Greek religion, he would then ſend for the princeſs. It was rather inconſiſtent with Ruſſian politics to hear a king hold ſuch language; and it is ſaid that an attempt was made, but in vain, to excite him to ſet the eſtates at defiance, offering him the forces neceſſary to puniſh them if they ſhould *revolt*. The king, however, would aſſent to no other terms.

Such was the reſult of this journey, upon which the public papers ſcarcely

ventured

ventured to comment. The king quitted Peterſburg the very day on which the anniverſary of the birth of the grand-duke Paul * was celebrated, one week after the breach; leaving the empreſs replete with ill-humour and reſentment; and in the heart of the young princeſs an equal degree of grief and of love, which were clearly perceptible by a lingering diſeaſe that ſucceeded, and in the general regret and eſteem of the public. Notwithſtanding this unforeſeen cataſtrophe, in order to prevent any remarks, preſents were made on both ſides; and the Ruſſians were ſo much the more ſurpriſed at the ſplendor and taſte diſplayed in thoſe of the king of Sweden, as they had affected always to ſpeak of him by the epithet of *the poor little boy.*

If little has been ſaid of the grand-duke

* The preſent emperor: is the 20th of September, old ſtile, or the 1ſt of October, new ſtile.

Paul

Paul on this occaſion, it is becauſe he had no more to do in what concerned his children than in the affairs of ſtate. He was at his ſeat of Gatſhina, and was ſeen at Peterſburg only once or twice during the time of the king's ſtay, which was about ſix weeks. The grand-ducheſs, his wife, on the contrary, made that tireſome and fatiguing journey three or four times a week, to be preſent at the entertainments given, and maintain, in appearance at leaſt, the rights and duties of a mother. This worthy princeſs ſaid, "If all my daughters coſt me ſo much "pains to provide them husbands, I "ſhall die on the road." Once, for form's ſake, the king was at Gatſhina and at Pavlofsky. Paul and the regent ſeemed by no means congenial to each other; and on this occaſion he appeared to be of his mother's opinion, and even to ſurpaſs her in his ſcruples and devotion to the orthodox Greek faith. It is

not

not improbable, however, but the whims of Paul may throw as many obſtacles in the way of his daughter's happineſs, as the vanity of Catharine, and the unſkilfulneſs of her miniſters*: the dreſs of the Swedes, their ſhort coats, cloaks, ribands, and round hats, are all of them his utter averſion.

* Some time after his acceſſion to the throne, Paul, going into the apartment of his daughters, began to joke with one of their maids of honour on the ſubject of her approaching marriage. "As to my daughter "Alexandra," added he, "ſhe cannot be married, "for her lover has not yet learned to write." The fact was, he had juſt received a letter from the king of Sweden, whoſe ſecretary had omitted in the addreſs ſome of the Emperor's titles; among others, the perfectly new one of the duke of Courland, &c. That no one in future might be guilty of this neglect, Paul iſſued a particular ukaſe, in which he preſcribed at full length the manner in which he choſe to be named; and, as if the vaſt Ruſſian empire ſtood in need of Spaniſh amplifications to make it appear great and powerful, he took the titles of all the ancient principalities: thoſe, by which it is his pleaſure to be addreſſed even in a petition, are ſufficient to fill a good page.

The

The forced failure of this marriage has truly overwhelmed with ridicule the Ruſſian miniſters; and it muſt have been very humiliating to the old empreſs to have ſuffered ſuch wretched means to have been employed. Does it not appear much beneath the Ruſſian empire to ſhow itſelf ſo embarraſſed about the ſettlement of its amiable princeſſes, and to play off ſo many great and little tricks to provide them huſbands? It is true, that the unbounded ambition of Catharine ſeems to have exerted itſelf to render their marriage difficult: like mademoiſelle Montpenſier formerly, ſhe has killed their huſbands with cannon-balls. A king of Poland, a duke of Courland, or even a hoſpodar of Moldavia: ſuch were the huſbands ſhe might have left them.

Let the deſtiny reſerved for the grand-ducheſſes, however, be what it may, they will undoubtedly be happier than the German princeſſes married in Ruſſia,

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moſt of whom have experienced the moſt wretched fate. The fearful lot of Sophia of Brunſwick, the wife of the miſerable tzarovitch Alexis, is well known. That of the regent Anne, the unfortunate mother of Ivan III. was ſtill more melancholy. Even the great Catharine herſelf, I hope, will not be urged as an exception: though ſurrounded with all the ſplendor of her court, yet the untimely death of her huſband ſecretly preyed on her mind. The only exception that can be made to this ſeries of unfortunate brides, is Elizabeth of Baden-Dourlach, whoſe character, and particularly that of her huſband, the grand-duke Alexander, ſeem to promiſe her a more happy life*.

* Even this exception ſeems now to have ceaſed: as, in conſequence of the king of Sweden's intermarriage with her ſiſter, a reſtraint, if not a total prohibition, is put upon her correſpondence with her family.

Young

Young and affecting victims, whom Germany ſeems to ſend by way of tribute to Ruſſia, how often do you bedew in ſecret with your tears the gilded apartments in which you dwell! How often are your thoughts caſt with regret on the loved abodes where you ſpent your infant years! Would not thoſe you might have paſſed in the arms of a huſband in your own country, in a climate favoured by heaven, amid a people more poliſhed and more happy, at a court leſs pompous and leſs corrupt, have been far preferable? Thoſe chains you wear are but the more heavy for being of gold: the pomp that ſurrounds you, the riches with which you are decked, are not yours, for you enjoy them not. If love embelliſh not by his illuſions the abode of weariſomeneſs and conſtraint in which you dwell, it will ſoon become to you a gloomy priſon. Your lot unqueſtionably

ably merits the compaſſion of thoſe who envy it.

What may not be ſaid of the want of pride in thoſe German princes who ſend their daughters to Ruſſia, to undergo the almoſt equal hazard of being choſen or rejected? She that is approved is unhappy, and they who are ſent back are inſulted; for the dowry given them, and the riband with which they are decorated, are but proofs that they have been offered, examined, and rejected. The mother of theſe princeſſes uſually accompanies her daughters in this diſtant journey, thus to diſpoſe of one of them by expoſing them all to a degrading choice. The times are certainly much changed. When the tyrant Ivan Baſiliovitch (Baſilides), deſirous of forming an alliance with one of the princes of Europe, ſent to Auguſtus Sigiſmond, king of Poland, to demand his ſiſter in marriage, his ambaſſador was diſmiſſed with a gray mare dreſſed

dreſſed like a woman. This piece of raillery was worthy of the age, and, no doubt, of the idea then entertained of a *véliki-kniaz*, or grand-prince of Ruſſia. Now, at the firſt beck of a Ruſſian autocrate, the German princes haſten to ſend their amiable daughters, with their mothers, that the *veliki-kniaz* may chooſe ſuch as they like, and ſend back the reſt covered with confuſion, which neither their ribands, nor jewels, nor rubles, can conceal. How, let me repeat, can the princes of Germany ſubmit to this daſtardly tribute, pay ſo little reſpect to decorum, and ſo wound the delicacy of their children!

Of all the victims thus led into * Ruſſia, the

* Catharine has ſent for eleven German princeſſes to provide wives for her ſons or grandſons: three princeſſes of Darmſtadt, brought by their mother; three princeſſes of Wurtemburg, but theſe came no farther than Pruſſia, Frederic the *unique* inſiſting that the grand-duke ſhould be gallant enough to meet them half way; two princeſſes of Baden; and three princeſſes

the two young princesses of Baden-Dourlach appeared the handsomest and most interesting. Their mother, by birth princess of Darmstadt, had already been sent thither in her youth with her sisters, one of whom became Paul's wife. This princess, an amiable woman, and worthy mother of a charming family, would not appear again with her daughters on a stage on which she herself had been exposed, but entrusted them to the care of the countess Schuvalof, widow of the author of the Epistle to Ninon, who was charged with the negociation, together with one Strekalof, whose conduct might be assimilated to that of a Cossack sent to Georgia to carry off maidens for the seraglio of the sultan.

cesses of Cobourg, conducted also by their mother. The young king of Sweden has made three journies out of his kingdom to choose himself a wife, while three princesses have been sent from the farther part of Germany for a junior grand-duke of Russia!

These

These princesses, after a long and tedious journey, arrived at night, towards the end of autumn 1792, and in terrible weather, which seemed materially to affect them. They were made to alight at the palace in which Potemkin had resided, where they were received by the empress, accompanied by Miss Branicka, her favourite. At first the young princesses took the latter for the empress; but the countess Schuvalof having undeceived them, they threw themselves at the empress's feet, and with tears kissed her robe and her hand, till she raised them up and embraced them: they were then left to sup in full liberty.

The next day Catharine came to see them, while they were yet at their toilette, and presented them the riband of the order of St. Catharine, jewels, and stuffs. She also examined their wardrobe, and on seeing it, said, "My young friends,

"when

"when I arrived in Ruſſia I was not ſo "rich as you*."

The young grand-dukes were introduced to them the ſame day. The eldeſt, who already ſuſpected the motive of their arrival, had a penſive and embarraſſed air, and ſaid nothing. Catharine told them, that knowing the mother of theſe princeſſes, and their country being taken by the French†, ſhe had ſent for them to have them educated at her court. On their return from the palace, the two young princes talked much of the young ſtrangers, and Alexander ſaid, that he thought the eldeſt very pretty‡. "O, not in the leaſt," cried the

* Catharine often ſaid, toward the end of her life, "I arrived in Ruſſia poor, but I will not die in debt "to the empire, for I ſhall leave her the Crimea and "Poland as my portion."

† It was at the time of Cuſtine's expedition into Germany.

‡ She was in reality charming: the grand-ducheſs Alexandra

the younger, "neither of them; they "must be ſent to Riga to the princes "of Courland: they are only fit for "them *."

What Alexander had ſaid, however, was reported to his grandmother, who was delighted to find that the lady ſhe deſigned for him, and with whom ſhe herſelf ſeemed enchanted, appeared handſome in his eyes. Catharine pretended that ſhe reſembled Louiſa of Baden when ſhe arrived in Ruſſia. She ordered the picture taken of her at that time to be brought, that ſhe might compare it with

Alexandra is the only beauty in the court of Ruſſia that can be compared with her. Her ſiſter was but a child, being only thirteen, but ſhe had ſomething ſtill more ſtriking and ſprightly.

* Theſe princes were educated there at that time, as being one day to ſucceed their uncle in the throne. The elder was intended for the ſecond grand-ducheſs Helena Pavlovna. But the ſcene is much changed with them: they are now ſubalterns in the army, and the elder has even been baniſhed to a garriſon of invalides.

the

the princeſs; and, as may be ſuppoſed, every one preſent declared that two drops of water could not be more alike. From that moment ſhe became ſingularly attached to Louiſa, redoubled her tenderneſs towards Alexander, and engaged with more pleaſure in the ſcheme of leaving the throne to them as her immediate ſucceſſors.

The young ſtrangers made their firſt appearance at court on the day when the deputies of Poland were admitted to thank Catharine for the honour ſhe had done the republic by keeping three-fourths of it for herſelf *.

The

* At this period, part of the kingdom or republic was left to Poland. The deputies, however, were received only as thoſe of a ſubject province; they ſtood uncovered, the empreſs ſitting; and ſhe ſaluted them only by a ſlight motion of the head, after they had proſtrated themſelves before her. Count Branicki, huſband of the empreſs's favourite, was the orator of this humiliating embaſſy, which would deliver its harangue, however, in the Poliſh language. The following ſentences of his ſpeech are remarkable:

 "The

The princesses were as much dazzled with the magnificence that surrounded them, as others were with their opening charms; but the elder met with an accident, which led the superstitious Russians to say that she would be unfortunate in their country. As she approached the throne of Catharine, she struck her foot against the corner of one of the steps, and fell flat on the ground before the throne. May the sad presage never be realised!

While the young sister spent her days sorrowfully in tears for her absence from her country and relations, which all the pomp of the court could not obliterate from her mind, and was at length sent

"The great Catharine has deigned to speak a word, "and give the signal; and despotism, ready to seize on "the throne of Poland, fell like an idol." This *word* of Catharine was a pamphlet composed by Altesti, in which all the nobles of Poland were termed jacobins, and the king seditious: this *signal* was the sending of two armies into the country, and the *idol of despotism* was the constitution of the 3d of May!

away

away loaded with presents, which afforded her less pleasure than the expectation of soon beholding again the banks of the Rhine *, the princess Louisa appeared to

* Besides several diamonds which she received, a pension was given her, which was to be exchanged for a marriage portion. As she is become queen of Sweden, I know not whether she has received her Russian dower. Among the presents made her was a riband of the order of St. Andrew for her father: this was the first order in Russia, and Catharine did not even know the number of its knights; as it appeared that the prince of Baden was one of them already. The empress, however, would not allow the riband to be sent back, but permitted the prince to bestow it on his son, then a child. It frequently happened that officers were presented with the insignia of orders which had been given to them before: one of these, having solicited some other recompence in vain, wore his two similar crosses at once. Catharine, it must be added, so magnificent on some occasions, displayed a ridiculous parsimony in bestowing on the governess of the princesses of Baden, who had educated them, and conducted them into Russia, a paltry pension of two hundred rubles (20*l.*), at which even the court of Carlsruhe was indignant. Similar acts of meanness frequently disgraced the liberalities of Catharine. She never gave willingly, except

to ſmile on the deſtiny that awaited her. An unknown comforter had entered her heart, and dried her tears. The ſight of the young prince, who was to be her huſband, and who equalled herſelf in beauty of perſon and gentleneſs of mind, had inſpired her with love. She ſubmitted gracefully to everything required of her, learned the Ruſſian language, was inſtructed in the Greek religion, and was ſoon in a capacity of making public profeſſion of her new faith, and receiving on her arms and bare delicate feet the unctions adminiſtered by a biſhop, who proclaimed her grand-ducheſs under the name of Elizabeth Alexievna. Catharine choſe rather

except to thoſe who had already too much: ſhe liked better to gratify than to recompenſe. Towards the end of her life ſhe grew niggardly, in particular towards the imperial family, who were ſometimes in want of neceſſaries, while the favourite and his creatures wallowed in profuſion.

to

to give her her own furname than leave her that of her father, as is cuftomary *.

In the month of May following, the ceremony of betrothing was performed with all extraordinary pomp and entertainments. Ruffia had juft finifhed three wars, almoft equally triumphant. A multitude of generals and other officers, covered with the laurels they had gathered in battle, added to the number of the court. A great many Swedes, admirers of Catharine; almoft all the Polifh nobles who had fubmitted or were devoted to her; Tartarian khans; envoys from

* The patronymic names of the Ruffians have fomething ancient and refpectable. A Ruffian might call the emprefs, even when fpeaking to her, *Ekaterina Alexievna*, Catharine daughter of Alexius. The princefs of Baden, therefore, fhould have called herfelf *Elizabetha Carlovna*, as fhe was the daughter of prince Charles. The Greeks had the fame cuftom; and we, happily tranflating the Ruffian terminations by the Greek, might fay Ivan Bafilides, Alexander Nicolaïdes, &c. as we fay Alcides, Seleucides, Heraclides.

Great

Great Bukharia; Turkish bashaws; Greek and Moldavian deputies; sophis of Persia; with French emigrants, demanding at once protection and vengeance*; increased at this juncture the crowd of courtiers attending the proud autocratrix of the north. No court ever exhibited such a brilliant and variegated spectacle. These were the last resplendent days that Catharine enjoyed. She dined on a throne raised in the midst of different tables. Crowned and covered with gold and diamonds, her eye carelessly wandered over the immense assembly, composed of persons of all nations, whom she seemed

* One day the young Richelieu, a Persian envoy, some deputies of the Calmucks, and an old Russian madman, whom Catharine created a knight, at the recommendation of N. Soltikof, for having prayed for her, were presented to the empress at the same time. Richelieu kissed her hand with all the ease of a Frenchman; the Persian, with the ceremonies of the east; the Calmucks, throwing themselves on the ground; and the old Russian, kneeling down, and raising his eyes to heaven.

to behold at her feet. Surrounded by her numerous and brilliant family, a poet would have taken her for Juno ſeated amidſt the gods *.

The arrival of the princeſs of Saxe-Cobourg with her three daughters, one of whom became the wife of the grand-duke Conſtantine, was leſs ſtriking. The Ruſſians even indulged in witty remarks on theſe princeſſes, and on the antiquity and bad taſte of their dreſs. They were

* This in fact took place, particularly in the following ſtrophe of the epithalamium:

Ni la reine de Thèbe au milieu de ſes filles,
Ni Louis de ſes fils aſſemblant les familles,
Ne formèrent jamais un cercle ſi pompeux.
Trois générations vont fleurir devant elle,
Et c'eſt elle toujours qui charmera nos yeux:
Fière, d'être leur mère, & non d'être immortelle,
Telle eſt Junon parmi les dieux.

The Theban queen amid her daughters fair,
The ſons of Lewis, an illuſtrious race,
Ne'er form'd a circle proudly born to grace
The wond'ring world with majeſty ſo rare!
Three glorious ſprings ſhall deck the reverend tree,
Whoſe ſtem immortal parentage ſhall claim,
And ſtill the peerleſs origin ſhall be
Like Juno, firſt in ſplendor as in fame.

not

not preſented till their wardrobe had been renewed. Conſtantine did not like either of them: he ſaid they had a German air; ſo Ruſſian was his taſte. It was neceſſary to inflame his imagination to induce him to make a choice; and this fell on the youngeſt, a little brunette, who diſplayed marks of wit, which excited intereſt in her behalf in the boſom of Conſtantine, of whoſe character we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter.

CHAP. II.

CATHARINE II.

Particulars of the ſickneſs and death of Catharine—Her portrait—Her character—Obſervations on her court, courtiers, and miniſters—Influence of the French Revolution on her mind—Queſtion examined, how far ſhe was the patron of letters—Her literary works—Manners and monuments of her reign.

THE viſit of the king of Sweden to Peterſburg, the entertainments to which it gave riſe, and the mortifying circumſtances in which it terminated, haſtened, no doubt, the death of Catharine. For ſix weeks ſhe had given herſelf up to a round

a round of amusements, and subjected herself to continual fatigue; for to her, the going up and down the stairs of the palace, the business of dressing, and appearing in public, had long been a wearisome task; and the more so, as she was still desirous of looking young and healthful, and was always averse to the use of her sedan. Aware of the first of these difficulties, several of her courtiers, upon occasion of the balls and entertainments that were given by them in honour of the king, contrived for her ease that the stairs of their houses should form a gentler ascent, which was richly carpeted. A gallantry of this kind cost Besborodko no less a sum than three thousand rubles (300*l.*), which he expended to render his house commodious for her reception.

Towards the close of her life, Catharine had so increased in size, as to be an object almost of deformity. Her legs, which

were

were always ſwollen and often ulcerated, had entirely loſt their ſhape, and ſhe could no longer boaſt that handſome foot which had formerly been ſo much admired. The noted pirate Lambro Canziani, whom admiral Ribas, through the favour of Zubof, had introduced to the empreſs, and who acted in quality of buffoon, after having previouſly ſerved her as corſair in the Archipelago, was deſirous alſo of preſcribing as her phyſician. He accordingly perſuaded her that he had an infallible remedy for her legs; and he himſelf was even at the pains of fetching water from the ſea for the purpoſe of a cold bath, to be uſed once a day for her feet. The application ſucceeded at firſt, and ſhe joined with Lambro in ridiculing the preſcriptions of her phyſicians: but the ſwellings ſoon returned, and from late hours and fatigue her diſorder greatly increaſed. When the king's

refuſal

refusal was announced to her, and she was obliged to dismiss her court after having summoned it to celebrate the betrothing of her grand-daughter, she experienced a slight stroke of apoplexy. From the constraint which for several days after she imposed on herself, that she might appear with her accustomed serenity, and betray no symptom of the vexation she felt at the refractoriness of *the little king* *, the blood and humours crowded still more to the head; her face, which was before highly inflamed, became at this period additionally red and livid, and her indisposition returned with greater frequency.

* This was an epithet which she gave him in derision. The young prince was ambitious from his infancy of the title of grown man, which he strove by his actions to merit. Walking one day in a park, two women cried, "Let us run to the path-way to see our "little king." Gustavus, hearing them, replied, somewhat piqued: "Little king! pray, ladies, have you "then a greater one?"

I should

I ſhould not perhaps have mentioned here the ſigns and tokens of her death: but as miracles are ſtill in faſhion in Ruſſia, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that on the evening of her viſit with the king at the houſe of Samoïlof, a bright ſtar ſhot from the ſky over her head, and fell into the Neva; and for the honour of truth and funereal tokens, I muſt add, that this fact was the common talk of the whole city. Some would have it, that this beautiful ſtar was a prognoſtic of the young queen's journey into Sweden; while others, remarking that it made its deſcent near the ſpot where the citadel and tombs of the ſovereigns were ſituated, tremblingly whiſpered that it was the harbinger of the approaching diſſolution of the empreſs. I ſay, *tremblingly whiſpered*; for in Ruſſia death and the empreſs were words that could not be coupled together without danger of puniſhment.

But

But waving this, it is certain, that on the 4th of November 1796, Catharine, having what was called her *little hermitage* (ſmall party), diſplayed an uncommon ſhare of ſpirits. By a veſſel from Lubeck, ſhe had received the news of the French under Moreau having been obliged to repaſs the Rhine, and ſhe wrote, upon this occaſion, to the Auſtrian miniſter Cobenzel a very humorous note *. She amuſed herſelf greatly with Leof Nariſhkin, her grand ecuyer and firſt buffoon, trafficking with him for all ſorts of bawbles, which he uſually carried in his pockets to ſell to her, like an itinerant pedlar, whoſe character he attempted to perſonate. She rallied him with great pleaſantry upon the terrors to which he was ſubject upon hearing of any obituary intelligence, by

* The note, which was in everybody's hands, was this: "I haſten to inform your excellent excellence, "that the excellent troops of the excellent court have "given the French an excellent drubbing."

informing

informing him of the death of the king of Sardinia, which ſhe had alſo juſt learned; and ſhe ſpoke of this event in a free and jocular manner. She retired, however, ſomewhat earlier than uſual, aſſigning as a reaſon, that too much laughing had given her ſlight ſymptoms of colic.

The next morning ſhe aroſe at her accuſtomed hour, and ſending for her favourite, gave him a ſhort audience. She afterwards tranſacted buſineſs with her ſecretaries, but diſmiſſed the laſt that came, bidding him wait in the antichamber, and ſhe would preſently call for him to finiſh what he was about. The valet, Zachary Conſtantinowitz, waited for awhile; but, uneaſy at not being called, and hearing no noiſe in the apartment, he at laſt opened the door, when he ſaw, to his ſurpriſe and terror, the empreſs proſtrate on the floor between the two doors leading from the alcove to her water-cloſet. She was already without ſenſe or motion.

motion. The valet ran for the favourite, whoſe apartment was above; phyſicians were ſent for; and conſternation and tumult prevailed about the empreſs. A mattreſs was ſpread near the window; ſhe was laid upon it; bleeding, bathing, and all the means uſually reſorted to upon ſuch occaſions, were employed, and they produced their ordinary effect. She was ſtill alive: her heart was found to beat; but there was no other perceptible ſign of motion. The favourite, ſeeing her in this alarming ſtate, ſent to the counts Soltikof and Bezborodko, and others of the nobility. Every one was eager to diſpatch a meſſenger to the grand-duke Paul; and the perſon employed in this ſervice by Zubof was his own brother. Meanwhile the imperial family, and the reſt of the houſehold, were ignorant of the ſituation of the empreſs, which was kept ſecret. Till eleven o'clock, her accuſtomed hour of ſummoning the grand-dukes, it was

not known that ſhe was at all indiſpoſed; and the circumſtance of her being ſeriouſly ill did not tranſpire till one; and was then mentioned with a timid and myſterious caution, through fear of the conſequences of miſtake. You might ſee two courtiers meet each other, both perfectly acquainted with the circumſtance of the apoplexy, yet queſtioning one another, anſwering in turn, watching each other's looks, and cautiouſly advancing ſtep by ſtep, that they might arrive both together at the terrible point, and be able to talk of what both already knew. It is neceſſary to have frequented a court, and eſpecially the court of Ruſſia, to be able to judge of the importance of theſe things, and exculpate the hiſtorian from the charge of abſurdity for relating actual circumſtances.

In the meantime, thoſe whom chance, or their connexion with office, placed in the way of being early informed of the

 truth,

truth, haſtened to communicate it to their families and friends; for the death of the empreſs was looked to as the epoch of ſome extraordinary revolution in the ſtate, as well from the character of Paul as from the projects and diſpoſitions of which Catharine was ſuſpected. It was, therefore, of importance to be able to take precautions in time; and the court firſt, and preſently the city, were in an alarming ſtate of agitation and anxiety.

Five or ſix couriers arrived nearly at the ſame inſtant at Gatſhina, but the grand-duke was abſent. He was gone a few miles with his court to inſpect a mill, which he had ordered to be conſtructed. Upon receiving the intelligence, he appeared extremely affected. He ſoon, however, recovered from his emotion, aſked a thouſand queſtions of the meſſengers, and gave orders for his journey, which he performed with ſuch

expedition,

expedition, that in leſs than three hours he was at Peterſburg, which is twelve leagues from his reſidence at Gatſhina. He arrived at eight in the evening with his wife, and found the palace in the greateſt confuſion.

His preſence attracted about him ſome courtiers and miniſters, while others diſappeared. The favourite, a prey to grief and terror, had relinquiſhed the reins of empire: the great, occupied with the conſequences of this event, arranged their affairs in private: all the intrigues of the court were diſconcerted in a moment, and, like the ſpokes of a wheel when the ſtock is deſtroyed, were without point of union.

Paul, accompanied by his whole family, repaired to the chamber of his mother, who gave, however, no ſign of recognition at the appearance of her aſſembled children. She was lying on the mattreſs, perfectly ſtill, and without any appear-

ance of life. The grand-duke Alexander, his wife, and the young princeſſes, burſt into tears, and formed round her a moſt affecting groupe. The grand-ducheſſes, the gentlemen and ladies of the court, were up all night, waiting the laſt ſigh of the empreſs. The grand-duke and his ſons were frequently by her ſide to witneſs this event; and the next day paſſed in the ſame anxiety and expectation.

Paul, whoſe grief for the loſs of a mother by whom he had been ſo little beloved, could not be expected to be extremely overwhelming, was occupied in giving directions and preparing every thing for his acceſſion. Catharine ſtill breathed, although nothing was thought of but the changes that were about to take place, and the individual who was on the point of ſucceeding her.

By degrees the apartments of the palace were filled with officers who had

come with expedition from Gatſhina, and were dreſſed in a manner ſo different to that which prevailed at Peterſburg, that they appeared to belong to ſome remote age, or to have arrived from another world. In the pale and haggard countenances of the old courtiers, wherever they were ſeen, mortification, terror, and grief, were depicted; and they ſucceſſively retired, to give place to the new comers. The palace was ſurrounded, and all the ſtreets that led to it were crowded with carriages; and he who could claim the ſlighteſt acquaintance paſſed the day there, waiting the effect of this ſudden event. Orders were given, that no perſon ſhould quit the city, and no courier was ſuffered to paſs the gates.

It was generally believed that Catharine had died the preceding evening, but that her death, for reaſons of ſtate, was ſtill concealed. The fact however is, that

that ſhe was all this time in a kind of lethargy. The remedies which were adminiſtered produced their natural effect, and ſhe had even moved one of her feet, and preſſed the hand of one of her women: *but, happily for Paul, the power of ſpeech was gone for ever.* About ten in the evening ſhe appeared ſuddenly to revive, and began to rattle in the throat in a moſt terrible manner. The imperial family haſtened to her; but this new and ſhocking ſpectacle was too much for the princeſſes, who were obliged to withdraw. At laſt ſhe gave a lamentable ſhriek, which was heard in the neighbouring apartments, and died, after having continued for thirty-ſeven hours in a ſtate of inſenſibility. During this period ſhe gave no indication of pain, till the moment before ſhe expired, and her death appears to have been as happy as her reign.

If the love which monarchs have de-

ſerved from their ſubjects has been ſometimes eſtimated by the impreſſion produced by their death, Ruſſia is not the country to which we can apply the obſervation, unleſs indeed the court be taken for the whole empire. The individual who was the greateſt loſer by the death of the empreſs, and whom it hurled at once from the pinnacle of greatneſs and power into the obſcurity from which favour had raiſed him, was alſo the individual who was moſt afflicted at the event; and there was ſomething in the expreſſion of his grief that was truly affecting. The young grand-ducheſſes, who had a tender regard for their grandmother, with whom they had lived on terms of greater familiarity than with their own parents, paid her alſo the unfeigned tribute of their tears: they conſidered her as their providing hand, and as the ſource from which flowed all their enjoyments and felicity. Thoſe

ladies

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ladies and courtiers too, who had experienced the kindneſs of her diſpoſition and enjoyed the pleaſure of her private ſociety, where ſhe diſplayed a moſt captivating amenity, in like manner lamented her death. Even the young perſons of her court, both male and female, regretted the happy evenings of the Hermitage, and that freedom of eaſe and pleaſure which Catharine ſo well knew how to inſpire; and they contraſted with theſe the military conſtraint and etiquette that were likely to ſucceed. The wits and railers of Peterſburg groaned in ſecret, that they now muſt reſpect the very perſons whom they ſo long had been accuſtomed to ridicule and deſpiſe, and ſubmit to a courſe of life that had been the conſtant and inexhauſtible topic of their ſarcaſms and jeſts. The menial ſervants of Catharine ſincerely bewailed a good and generous miſtreſs, whoſe mild and equal

temper,

temper, and noble and dignified character, were above thofe daily bickerings, thofe gufts of petty paffion, which are the poifon of domeftic life. In truth, if we judge of Catharine as of the mother of a family, confider her palace as her houfe, her courtiers as her children, fhe was entitled to lamentations and tears.

There were other perfonages on this difaftrous occafion of a pale and woeful afpect; but thefe were incapable of weeping. In them it was an air of guilt rather than of fadnefs, and their grief would bear no conftruction favourable to Catharine. I refer to thofe creatures of the favourite, thofe hypocritical minifters, thofe daftardly courtiers, that crowd of wretches of all ftates and conditions, whofe fortunes and hopes were derived from the eafy difpofition of Catharine, and the abufes of her reign. In this dark lift muft be alfo included thofe who

had

had a ſhare in the revolution of 1762: theſe men appeared to awake as from a long dream, which had ſuſpended reflection, to be delivered up to the influence of terror, and perhaps of remorſe.

As to the opinion of the people, that pretended touchſtone of the merit of ſovereigns, nothing could equal their indifference as to what was going on in the palace. It was ſaid, indeed, that proviſions would be cheaper, and the power of maſters over their ſlaves be reſtrained and limited. The principal inhabitants of the city were in a ſtate of ſilent conſternation.

In ſo extenſive a capital, and eſpecially in ſo polite and brilliant a court, ſome extraordinary changes were quickly viſible. The air of freedom, of eaſe, and of gallantry, which had ſo lately prevailed, was ſucceeded by a viſible conſtraint. In the apartments in which Catharine had juſt fallen into the ſleep

of death, the word of command; the clattering of ſwords and of ſoldiers, and the echo of enormous boots, already reſounded. From the ſombre dreſs of the ladies, the unuſual garb of the men, the ſtrange phraſeology which every one was eager to adopt, and the general contraſts with what had exiſted before, thoſe who had been acquainted with each other met without being known, ſpoke without being underſtood, and aſked queſtions without receiving an anſwer. The day of St. Catharine, hitherto celebrated with ſo much pomp and rejoicings, arrived at this interval, as if to depict with greater horror the deſolation of this fairy palace, heretofore the theatre of ſo many pleaſures and entertainments.

Though ſeventy years of age, Catharine ſtill retained ſome remains of beauty. Her hair was always dreſſed in the old ſtile of ſimplicity, and with peculiar neat-

neſs,

neſs, and no head ever became a crown better than hers. She was of the middle ſtature, and corpulent; few women, however, with her corpulence, would have attained the graceful and dignified carriage for which ſhe was remarked. In private, the good-humour and confidence with which ſhe inſpired all about her, ſeemed to keep up an unceaſing ſcene of youth, playfulneſs, and gaiety. Her charming converſation and familiar manners placed all thoſe who were admitted to her dreſſing-room or aſſiſted at her toilette, perfectly at eaſe; but the moment ſhe had put on her gloves to make her appearance in the neighbouring apartments, ſhe aſſumed a very different countenance and deportment. From an agreeable and facetious woman, ſhe appeared all at once the reſerved and majeſtic empreſs. Whoever had ſeen her then for the firſt time would have found her not below the idea he had previouſly formed,

formed, and would have said, "This "is indeed the Semiramis of the north!" The maxim, *Præſentia minuit famam*, could no more be applied to her than to Frederic the Great. I ſaw her once or twice a week for ten years, and every time with renewed admiration. My eagerneſs to examine her perſon cauſed me ſucceſſively to neglect proſtrating myſelf before her with the crowd; but the homage I paid by gazing at her, was ſurely more flattering. She walked ſlowly, and with ſhort ſteps; her majeſtic forehead unclouded, her look tranquil, and her eyes often caſt on the ground. Her mode of ſaluting was by a ſlight inclination of the body, yet not without grace; but the ſmile ſhe aſſumed, vaniſhed with the occaſion. If, upon the introduction of a ſtranger, ſhe preſented her hand to him to kiſs, ſhe demeaned herſelf with great courteſy, and commonly addreſſed a few words to him upon

upon the ſubject of his travels and his viſit: but all the harmony of her countenance was inſtantly diſcompoſed, and you forgot for a moment the great Catharine, to reflect on the infirmities of an old woman; as, on opening her mouth, it was apparent that ſhe had no teeth. Her voice too was hoarſe and broken, and her ſpeech inarticulate. The lower part of her face was rather large and coarſe; her grey eyes, though clear and penetrating, evinced ſomething of hypocriſy, and a certain wrinkle at the baſe of the noſe indicated a character ſomewhat ſiniſter. The celebrated Lampi had lately painted a ſtriking likeneſs of her, though extremely flattering: Catharine, however, remarking that he had not entirely omitted that unfortunate wrinkle, the evil genius of her face, was greatly diſſatisfied, and ſaid that Lampi had made her too ſerious and too wicked. He muſt accordingly retouch, and ſpoil the

picture,

picture, which appeared now like the portrait of a young nymph; though the throne, the sceptre, the crown, and some other attributes, sufficiently indicate that it is the picture of an empress. In other respects, the performance well deserves the attention of the amateur, as also does a portrait of the present empress by the same hand *.

The character of Catharine can, in my opinion, only be estimated from her ac-

* The celebrated Le Brun, who was at Petersburg, and who could not obtain the honour of taking her likeness when living, saw her after she was dead, and drew it from his memory and imagination. I saw the rough draught of this portrait, which was extremely like.—The following humorous advice was given to M. le Brun to render the resemblance perfect: Take a map of the Russian empire for the canvas; the darkness of ignorance, for the ground; the spoils of Poland, for the drapery; human blood, for the colouring; the monuments of her reign, for the outlines; and for the shading, six months of the reign of her successor.

tions.

tions. Her reign, for herſelf and her court, had been brilliant and happy; but the laſt years of it were particularly diſaſtrous for the people and the empire. All the ſprings of government became debilitated and impaired. Every general, governor, chief of department, was become a petty deſpot. Rank, juſtice, impunity, were ſold to the higheſt bidder. An oligarchy of about a ſcore of knaves partitioned Ruſſia, pillaged, by themſelves or others, the finances, and ſhared the ſpoils of the unfortunate. Their loweſt valets, and even their ſlaves, obtained in a ſhort time offices of conſiderable importance and emolument. One had a ſalary of from three to four hundred roubles a year (30 or 40 *l.*), which could not poſſibly be increaſed by any honeſt dealing, yet was he ſufficiently rich to build round the palace houſes valued at fifty thouſand crowns (12,500l.)

Catha-

Catharine, so far from inquiring into the impure source of such sudden wealth, rejoiced to see her capital thus embellished under her eyes, and applauded the inordinate luxury of these wretches, which she erroneously considered as a proof of the prosperity of her reign. In the worst days of France, pillage was never so general, and never so easy. Whoever received a sum of money from the crown for any undertaking, had the impudence to retain half, and afterwards complained of its insufficiency, for the purpose of obtaining more; and either an additional sum was granted, or the enterprise abandoned. The great plunderers even divided the booty of the little ones, and thus became accomplices in their thefts. A minister knew almost to a ruble what his signature would procure to his secretary; and a colonel felt no embarrassment in talking with a general of the profits of the army, and the extortions

he made upon the soldiers*. Every one, from the peculiar favourite to the lowest in employ, considered the property of the state as an harvest to be reaped, and grasped at it with as much avidity as the populace at an ox given up to be devoured. The Orlofs, as well as Potemkin and Panin, filled their places

* The colonel was the despot of his regiment, of which he had the exclusive management, in whole and in detail. The Russian army, wherever it may be situated, whether in a subjected territory, the territory of an ally, or that of an enemy, always living at free quarters, the colonels regularly take to themselves nearly the whole of the money destined for its support. By way of indemnification, they turn the horses into the fields, and the men into the houses of the peasants, there to live free of expence. The pay of a colonel is from seven to eight hundred rubles (70*l.* or 80*l.*) only a year; but the profit he derives from a regiment amounts to fifteen or twenty thousand (1500*l.* or 2000*l.*) A minister asking one day some favour of the empress for a poor officer, she replied, "If he be poor, it is his own fault; he has "long had a regiment." Thus robbery was privileged, and probity laughed at and despised.

with

with a degree of dignity. The firſt diſplayed ſome talents, and an inordinate ambition: Panin had greater genius, greater patriotiſm, and more virtues*. In general, during the laſt years of Catharine, none were ſo little as the great. Without knowledge, without penetration, without pride, without probity, they could not even boaſt that falſe honour which is to loyalty what hypocriſy is to virtue:

* He did one act of generoſity in particular, which has found no imitators. The education of the grand-duke Paul, to whom he was firſt governor, being finiſhed, the empreſs, among other rewards for this ſervice, gave him ſeven thouſand peaſants, while the aides de camp, ſecretaries, and others employed by count Panin as his aſſiſtants, were totally unnoticed by her. Panin immediately divided among them the ſeven thouſand peaſants; and I have ſeen ſeveral officers who are ſtill rich with the boon. This generous action ſhould not, however, lead us to forget, that the two principal meaſures of his adminiſtration were marked with misfortune: the exchange of Holſtein for ſix ſhips, which Denmark never gave; and the firſt diviſion of Poland, which excited a craving for the remainder.

unfeeling as bashaws, rapacious as tax-gatherers, pilfering as lacqueys, and venal as the meaneſt abigails of a play, they might truly be called the rabble of the empire. Their creatures, their hirelings, their valets, and even their relations, did not accumulate wealth by the gifts of their bounty, but by the extortions committed in their name, and the traffic made of their credit: they alſo were robbed themſelves, as they robbed the crown. The meaneſt ſervices rendered to theſe men were paid by the ſtate; and the wages of their buffoons, ſervants, muſicians, private ſecretaries, and even tutors of their children, defrayed out of ſome public fund, of which they had the control. Some few among them ſought for talents, and appeared to eſteem merit: but neither talents nor merit acquired a fortune under their protection, or partook of their wealth; partly from the avarice of thoſe patrons, but ſtill more from

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their total want of decency and judgment. The only way of gaining their favour was by becoming their buffoon, and the only mode of turning it to account was by turning knave.

Thus, during this reign, almoſt every man in office, or who had credit at court, was the favourite of fortune, and acquired riches and honours. At the galas given by the empreſs, ſwarms of new-created counts and princes made their appearance, and that at a time when in France all titles were about to be aboliſhed. If we except the Soltikofs, we ſhall find at this period no family of diſtinction taken into favour. To any other country this would have been no evil; but in Ruſſia, where the rich nobility is the only claſs that has any education, and often any principles of honour, it was a ſerious calamity to the empire. Beſides, all theſe upſtarts were ſo many hungry leeches, who muſt be fed with

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the best blood of the state, and fattened with the hard earnings of the people. A frequent change of kings is often not burthensome to a state, to whom it still remains an inheritance; but a continual change of favourites and ministers, who must all load their hives before they depart, is enough to ruin any country but Russia. How many millions must it have cost to fill successively the rapacious maws of about a dozen peculiar favourites? How many, to render rich and noble the Besborodkos, the Zavadofskys, the Markofs, and a too numerous list of others who might be named? Have not the Orlofs, the Potemkins, the Zubofs, acquired revenues greater than those of kings; and their underlings, agents in the sale of their signatures, and managers of their petty traffic, become more wealthy than the most successful merchants *?

With

* A work has fallen into my hands, intitled "Life "of Catharine II." in which the author gives a statement

With reſpect to the government of Catharine, it was as mild and moderate, within the immediate circle of her influence, as it was arbitrary and terrible at a diſtance. Whoever, directly or indirectly, enjoyed the protection of the favourite, exerciſed, wherever he was ſituated, the moſt undiſguiſed tyranny. He inſulted his ſuperiors, trampled on his inferiors, and violated juſtice, order, and the *ukaſes**, with impunity.

It is to the policy firſt, and next to the weakneſs of Catharine, to which in part muſt be attributed the relaxed and diſorganized ſtate of her internal government: though the principal cauſe will

ment of the ſums obtained by the favourites. But how very defective is this eſtimate, and how much below the truth! How is it poſſible, indeed, to calculate the immenſe ſums which have enriched the Orlofs, the Potemkins, and the Zubofs, favourites who had the ſame acceſs to the treaſury of the ſtate, as to their own private coffers?

* Edicts of the emperor.

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be found in the depraved manners and character of the nation. How was a woman to effect that which the active discipline of the cane, and the sanguinary axe of Peter I. were inadequate to accomplish. The usurper of a throne, which she was desirous to retain, she was under the necessity of treating her accomplices with kindness. A stranger in the empire over which she reigned, she sought to remove everything discordant, everything heterogeneous, and to become one with the nation, by adopting and even flattering its tastes and its prejudices. She often knew how to reward, but never how to punish; and it was solely by suffering her power to be abused, that she succeeded in preserving it.

She had two passions, which never left her but with her last breath: the love of man, which degenerated into licentiousness; and the love of glory, which

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ſunk into vanity. By the firſt of theſe paſſions, ſhe was never ſo far governed as to become a Meſſalina, but ſhe often diſgraced both her rank and her ſex: by the ſecond, ſhe was led to undertake many laudable projects, which were ſeldom completed, and to engage in unjuſt wars, from which ſhe derived at leaſt that kind of fame which never fails to accompany ſucceſs.

The generoſity of Catharine, the ſplendor of her reign, the magnificence of her court, her inſtitutions, her monuments, her wars, were preciſely to Ruſſia what the age of Louis XIV. was to Europe; but, conſidered individually, Catharine was greater than this prince. The French formed the glory of Louis, Catharine formed that of the Ruſſians. She had not, like him, the advantage of reigning over a poliſhed people; nor was ſhe ſurrounded from infancy by great and accompliſhed characters. She had ſubtle

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ambaſſadors, not unſkilled in the diplomatic art, and ſome fortunate generals; but Romanzof, Panin, and Potemkin excepted, ſhe could not boaſt a ſingle man of genius: for the wit, cunning, and dexterity of certain of her miniſters, the ferocious valour of a Suvarof, the ductile capacity of a Repnin, the favour of a Zubof, the readineſs of a Beſborodko, and the aſſiduity of a Nicholas Soltikof, are not worthy of being mentioned as exceptions. It was not that Ruſſia did not produce men of merit; but Catharine feared ſuch men, and they kept at a diſtance from her. We may conclude, therefore, that all her meaſures were her own, and particularly all the good ſhe did.

Let not the misfortunes and abuſes of her reign give to the private character of this princeſs too dark and repulſive a ſhade! She appeared to be thoroughly humane and generous, as all who

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approached her experienced: all who were admitted to her intimacy were delighted with the good-natured ſallies of her wit: all who lived with her were happy. Her manners were gay and licentious, but ſhe ſtill preſerved an exterior decorum, and even her favourites always treated her with reſpect. Her love never excited diſguſt, nor her familiarity contempt. She might be deceived, won, ſeduced, but ſhe would never ſuffer herſelf to be governed. Her active and regular life, her moderation, firmneſs, fortitude, and even ſobriety, are moral qualities which it would be highly unjuſt to aſcribe to hypocriſy. How great might ſhe not have been, had her heart been as well governed as her mind! She reigned over the Ruſſians leſs deſpotic than over herſelf; ſhe was never hurried away by anger, never a prey to dejection, and never indulged in tranſports of immoderate joy. Caprice, ill-humour, and

peeviſh-

peeviſhneſs, formed no part of her character, and were never perceived in her conduct. I will not decide, whether ſhe were truly great, but ſhe was certainly beloved*.

* Many quatrains have been compoſed, either to ſerve as an epitaph, or be placed under the portrait of Catharine, but none have been ſtruck off ſo happily, or deſcribe her ſo truly, as the following. They are from the pens of two young Ruſſians, the pleaſant qualities of whoſe mind are enhanced by thoſe of an admirable character, and a generous heart.

Elle fit oublier, par un eſprit ſublime,
D'un pouvoir odieux, les énormes abus,
Elle ſe maintint par ſes vertus
Sur un trône acquis par le crime.

" Bleſs'd in her ſway, her ſubjects might diſown
" Th' unnumber'd evils of deſpotic rule;
" And tho' a crime had fixed her on the throne,
" She reign'd by precepts drawn from Virtue's ſchool."

The next is more flattering, but not inferior in merit:

Dans le ſein de la paix, au milieu de la guerre,
A tous ſes ennemis elle dicta la loi:
Par ſes talens divers elle étonna la terre,
Ecrivit comme un ſage, & regna comme un roi.

" Amid the train of Peace, or din of War,
" Each foe appall'd her ſov'reign will obey'd;
" Her mighty genius held the world in awe;
" Like ſages wrote, like Jove the ſceptre ſway'd."

Imbued,

Imbued, from her youth, with the corrupt maxims by which courts are infected; enveloped, on her throne, in a cloud of incenſe, through which it was hardly poſſible for her to ſee clearly, it would be too ſevere to apply at once the ſearching light of reaſon to her character, and try its defects by ſo ſtrict an inqueſt. Let us judge her now as we would ſome twenty years ago, and conſider Ruſſia ſtill, as to the people, as in the age of Charlemagne. The friends of liberty ought to render to Catharine the ſame juſtice as is rendered by all rational theologians to thoſe great and wiſe men who did not enjoy the light of revelation. Her crimes were the crimes of her ſtation, not of her heart: the terrible ſcenes of Iſmail and of Prague appeared to her court to be humanity itſelf. She needed perhaps only to be unfortunate, to have poſſeſſed the pureſt virtues; but the unvaried proſperity of her

arms

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

arms, dazzled and corrupted her. Vanity, that unfortunate rock ſo fatal to every female, was her great failing; and her reign will ever bear the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of her ſex.

Meanwhile, in whatever light ſhe is conſidered, ſhe will ever be placed in the firſt rank among thoſe who, by their genius, their talents, and eſpecially their ſucceſs, have attracted the admiration of mankind. Her ſex, giving a bolder relief to the great qualities ſhe diſplayed on the throne, will place her above all the examples of real hiſtory; and the fabulous ages of an Iſis and a Semiramis muſt be reſorted to, to find a woman who has executed, or rather undertaken, ſuch daring projects.

The ten laſt years of her reign carried her power, her glory, and perhaps her political crimes, to their height. When the great Frederic, dictator of the kings of Europe, died, ſhe was left the

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ſenior ſovereign, the eldeſt of the crowned heads of the continent of Europe; and if we except Joſeph and Guſtavus, all thoſe heads taken together were unequal to her own: for ſhe ſurpaſſed them as much in underſtanding, as ſhe exceeded them in the extent of her territories. If Frederic was the dictator of theſe kings, Catharine became their tyrant. It was then that the end of that political thread, by which poor Europe had been moved like a puppet, and which had eſcaped from France to Berlin, and from Berlin to Vienna, became fixed in the hands of a woman who drew it as ſhe pleaſed. The immenſe empire, an empire almoſt of romance, which ſhe had ſubjected to her ſway; the inexhauſtible reſources ſhe derived from a country and a people as yet in a ſtate of infancy; the extreme luxury of her court, the barbarous pomp of her nobility, the wealth and princely grandeur of her favourites, the glorious ex-

ploits

ploits of her armies, and the gigantic views of her ambition, threw Europe into a ſort of faſcinating admiration; and thoſe monarchs, who had been too proud to pay each other even the ſlighteſt deference, found no humiliation in making a lady the arbiter of their intereſts, the ruling power of all their meaſures.

But the French revolution, ſo unfriendly to ſovereigns in general, was particularly ſo to Catharine. The blaze, which ſuddenly emerged from the boſom of France as from the crater of a burning volcano, poured a ſtream of light upon Ruſſia vivid as that of lightning; and injuſtice, crimes, and blood were ſeen, where before all was grandeur, glory, and virtue. Catharine trembled with fear and indignation. The French, thoſe ſweet heralds of her fame, thoſe flattering and brilliant hiſtorians, who were one day to tranſmit to poſterity the wonders of her reign, were ſuddenly transformed

into ſo many inexorable judges, at whoſe aſpect ſhe ſhuddered. The phantoms of her imagination were diſpelled. That empire of Greece ſhe was ſo deſirous of reviving, thoſe laws ſhe would have eſtabliſhed, that philoſophy ſhe intended to inculcate, and thoſe arts which ſhe had patroniſed, became odious in her ſight. As a crowned philoſopher, ſhe valued the ſciences ſo far only as they appeared the inſtruments for diſſeminating her glory. She wiſhed to hold them as a dark lantern in her hand; to make uſe of their light as ſhould ſuit her convenience; to ſee without being ſeen: but when they dazzled her all at once with their bright emanations, ſhe wiſhed to extinguiſh them. She, who had been the friend and diſciple of the French ſpeculative writers*, now wiſhed to be re-enveloped in

* Upon the breaking out of the revolution, Catharine ordered the buſt of Voltaire to be taken from the gallery, and thrown among the lumber. She had requeſted

in the ages of barbarifm: but her wifhes were vain; the light was not to be refifted: if fhe compofed herfelf to fleep on laurels, fhe awoke on the carcafes of the dead: glory, which in illufion fhe embraced, was changed in her arms into one of the furies: and the legiflatrix of the north, forgetting her own maxims and philofophy, was no longer any thing more than an old fybil. Her daftardly favourites, everywhere pointing out to her in this event, Brutufes, jacobins, and incendiaries, fucceeded in filling up the meafure of her fufpicions and terrors. Her delirium was even carried fo far, that on a king, who extended his

requefted a buft of Fox at the period when, at the head of the Britifh oppofition, he prevented by his exertions the government of his country from declaring war againft Ruffia. When this fame Fox, however, oppofed with equal ftrenuoufnefs a war with France, this buft alfo, which a year before fhe had fo highly honoured, was ferved in the fame manner as Voltaire's.

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prerogatives, and a nobility that meliorated its government, she bestowed the appellations of rebels and traitors: the Poles were treated as jacobins, because they had not the misfortune to be Russians*.

Had Catharine been asked, when her mind was calm, if she had not herself considerably advanced and helped to strengthen this revolution, what would she have answered? Yet such is the fact: since, if she had not been so eager to seize upon the unfortunate country of the Poles, and afterwards to raise dissensions in Prussia and Sweden, she would

* The Americans, even at this epoch, became hateful to Catharine. She condemned a revolution which she had formerly pretended to admire, called Washington a rebel, and said publicly, that a man of honour could not wear the order of Cincinnatus. Accordingly Langeron, and some other emigrants, who had been invested with this order, immediately renounced it, and were seen in it no longer.

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not have difgufted, as fhe did, all Europe and the combination of princes; Pruffia would not have been induced fo fpeedily to make peace, that he might be at leifure to watch her proceedings; nor would fhe have excited the indignation of Spain, by employing againft a catholic king and a catholic nobility the fame arms and the fame infults as were employed againft the French. In this view, France may erect a ftatue to her memory; for fhe has rendered the fyftem of the enemies of that country odious and abfurd to all monarchs; and has done the republic the fame fervice as demagogues have by their enormities, and minifters by their intrigues.

Catharine never effectually patronifed letters in the ftates of her empire. It was the reign of Elizabeth that had encouraged them; and it was diftinguifhed by many productions worthy of proving to

Europe

Europe that the Ruſſians may lay fair claim to every ſpecies of excellence*. Catharine, indeed, purchaſed a few libraries and collections of pictures, penſioned a few flatterers, flattered a few celebrated men, who might be inſtrumental in ſpreading her fame, and readily ſent a medal or a ſnuff-box to a German writer who dedicated ſome hyperbolical work to her: but it was neceſſary to have come from ſome diſtance to pleaſe her, and to have acquired a great name to be entitled to her ſuffrage, and particularly to obtain any recompenſe. Genius might be born at her feet without being noticed,

* The author of theſe Memoirs may perhaps one day poſſeſs the requiſite materials, and the leiſure and tranquillity, for exhibiting to his countrymen a view of Ruſſian literature. They will be aſtoniſhed to find how nearly, in delicacy of wit, as well as in ſentiment, ſprightlineſs, and taſte, it reſembles their own. The Ruſſian theatre is particularly formed upon that of the French. Government, manners, and language, are the only things in which the two nations ſtrikingly differ from each other.

ticed*, and ſtill more without being encouraged; yet, jealous of every kind of fame, and eſpecially of that which Frederic the *unique* had obtained by his writings, ſhe was deſirous of becoming an author, that ſhe might ſhare in it. She accordingly wrote her celebrated *Inſtructions for a Code of Laws*; ſeveral moral tales and allegories for the education of her grand-children; and a number of dramatic pieces and proverbs, which were acted and admired at the Hermitage. Her great undertaking, of which ſhe was ſo vain, of collecting a number of words from three hundred different languages, and forming them into a dictionary, was never executed.

* Many architects, painters, ſculptors, mechanics, and other artiſts of great talents, lived and died in obſcurity and wretchedneſs, merely becauſe they were Ruſſians. Their names can only be found in certain topographical deſcriptions, or the accounts of foreign travellers, by whom more juſtice has been done them than by their own country.

Of all her writings, her letters to Voltaire are certainly the beſt. They are even more intereſting than thoſe of the old philoſophical courtier himſelf, who ſold her watches and knitted ſtockings for her*; and who repeats in his letters the ſame ideas and compliments in a hundred different forms, and excites her continually to drive the Turks out of Europe, inſtead of adviſing her to render her own ſubjects free and happy. If the code of laws drawn up by Catharine beſpeak a mind capable of enlarged views and a ſound policy, her letters announce the wit, graces, and talents of a woman of ſtill greater merit, and lead us to regret the means by which ſhe obtained the acquiſition of her power.

When ſhe publiſhed her Inſtructions †, all

* This he ſays himſelf in one of his letters to her.

† It is known, that her Inſtruction for a Code came under the *index expurgatorius*, and was prohibited

all Europe reſounded with her applauſe, and beſtowed upon her already the title of legiſlatrix of the north. Catharine ordered deputies to be aſſembled from the different nations of her vaſt empire; but it was only that they might hear this celebrated performance read, and that ſhe might receive their compliments; for as ſoon as this was done, they were all ſent back to their diſtant homes, ſome in diſgrace for their firmneſs, others decorated with medals for their ſervility. The manuſcript was depoſited in a magnificent caſe, to be exhibited to the curioſity of ſtrangers. A

bited in France. Catharine and Voltaire joined in railing at this proceeding. Who would have thought that, twenty years after, all French publications whatever would be proſcribed in Ruſſia, and that a lieutenant of police of the very ſame Catharine would confiſcate at Peterſburg, in the ſhop of Gay, the bookſeller, *L'Avis au Peuple par Tiſſot*, "Tiſſot's Advice "to the People;" alleging that the people wanted no advice, and that it was a dangerous book.

ſort of committee was nominated to reduce theſe laws into form; and if a favourite or miniſter had any dependent for whom he wiſhed to provide, or any buffoon whom he wanted to maintain free of expenſe, he was appointed a member of this committee, whence he derived a ſalary*. Yet all Europe vociferated that Ruſſia had laws, becauſe Catharine had written a preface to a code, and had ſubjected a hundred different people to the ſame ſyſtem of ſlavery†.

* The author of theſe Memoirs knew, among other perſonages, one Mitrophanus Popof, a buffoon, bigot, and interpreter of dreams to a lady of the court, who was a member of this committee: he had never heard of the Inſtruction for a Code, and was unable to read it.

† The Inſtruction for a Code is ſo literally taken from Monteſquieu and Beccaria, that Mr. F**** de B****, who undertook to tranſlate it, thought he could not do better than copy the text of theſe celebrated writers. The curious may be ſatisfied of this fact by examining the tranſlation, which was printed for Graſſet, at Lauſanne. I had my information from this reſpectable man himſelf.

Among

Among the dramatical pieces that were composed by her*, and which she caused to be acted in the theatres of Petersburg, one was of a new kind: it was neither tragedy, nor comedy, nor opera, nor play, but an assemblage of all sorts of scenes, and intitled OLEG, *an historical representation.* Upon the celebration of the last peace with the Turks, it was got up by her direction with extraordinary pomp and the most magnificent decorations, and upwards of seven hundred performers appeared upon the stage. The subject is wholly taken from Russian history, and comprises an entire epoch. In the first act, *Oleg* lays the foundation of Mosco. In the se-

* They are written in Russ. M. Derjavin, secretary to the empress, and known by some other works, was considered as the maker, or at least the mender, of them. It is certain, however, that she never had about her a man capable of writing her letters to Voltaire in French. Odart and Aubri, her secretaries at the time, did not write so well as herself. She was unquestionably the author.

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cond, he is at Kief, where he marries his pupil *Igor*, and settles him on the throne. The ancient ceremonies obferved upon the marriage of the tzars gave an opportunity of introducing fome amufing fcenes, and the national dances and fports, which are exhibited, furnifh many charming pictures. *Oleg* then fets out upon an expedition againft the Turks: we fee him file off with his army, and embark. In the third act, he is at Conftantinople. The emperor Leof, obliged to fign a truce, receives this barbarian hero with the greateft magnificence. He is feen feafting at his table, while fome troops of young Greeks, boys and girls, fing a chorus to his praife, and exhibit before him the ancient dances of Greece. The next fcenic decoration reprefents the hippodrom, where *Oleg* is entertained with the fpectacle of the Olympic Games. Another theatre is then erected at the bottom of the ftage,

and

and ſome ſcenes from Euripides are played before the court. At length *Oleg* takes leave of the emperor, faſtening his ſhield to a pillar in teſtimony of his viſit, and to invite his ſucceſſors to return one day to Conſtantinople, in imitation of his example.

The piece is truly Ruſſian, and particularly emblematical of the character of Catharine: her favourite projects are repreſented in it, and the deſign of ſubjugating Turkey is alluded to, even when celebrating a peace with that country. Properly ſpeaking, the performance is nothing more than a magic lantern, exhibiting different objects in ſucceſſion to the eyes of the beholder: but to me ſuch exhibitions, in which the great events of hiſtory are introduced as in a picture on the ſtage, are more intereſting than the ſtrainings of the throat of our opera ſingers, and the amorous intrigues of ſome of our tragedies.

Catha-

Catharine was neither fond of poetry nor of music, and she often confessed it. She could not endure the noise of the orchestra between the acts of a play, and she commonly silenced it. This defect of taste and feeling in a woman, who appeared in other respects so happily constituted, is astonishing, yet may serve to explain how, with so extraordinary a capacity and genius, she could become so obdurate and sanguinary. At her palace of Tauris, she constantly dined with the two pictures of the sacking of Otchakof and Ismaïl before her eyes, in which Cazanova has represented, with a most hideous accuracy, the blood flowing in streams, the limbs torn from the bodies and still palpitating, the demoniac fury of the murderers, and the convulsive agonies of the murdered. It was upon these scenes of horror that her attention and imagination were fixed, while Gasparini and Mandini displayed their

vocal powers, or Sarti conducted a concert in her presence.

This same empress, who wrote plays herself; who admired Ségur for his wit, and heard him sometimes repeat his verses; who had the most ridiculous farces played before her by her old courtiers, and particularly by count Stackelberg*,

* In the little societies of Catharine, all sorts of frolics and gambols were played. The old gouty courtiers were seen making their whimsical efforts to frisk and caper; and the grand-duke Constantine one day actually broke the arm of the feeble count Stackelberg, by rudely jostling against him, and throwing him down. Heretofore Ségur had acted a part in those societies unworthy of his rank and understanding. Among the verses he wrote in compliment to the empress, the following, which are the epitaph of a dog, have often been cited, and merit to be preserved. They are in the true spirit of French gallantry:

Pour prix de sa fidélité,
Le ciel, témoin de sa tendresse,
Lui devoit l'immortalité,
Pour qu'elle fût toujours auprès de sa maîtresse.

" Her fond fidelity Heav'n saw, and priz'd,
" And to reward her tenderness bestow'd
" The precious gift to live immortaliz'd,
" Enjoying still her mistress's abode."

and

and the Auftrian minifter*, recalled and difgraced one of her own minifters, be-

* No ambaffador, perhaps, was ever fo long at a court, and upon fuch good terms, as Cobenzel at the court of Ruffia. He had been fent originally by Maria Therefa, and was afterwards confirmed in his office by all her fucceffors. He was of a mean and unwieldy figure, but had a confiderable fhare of wit, and of that peculiar fort in particular that is pleafing to women. He was for ten years the affiduous admirer of the charming princefs Dolgoruka, and Catharine delighted in his fociety. He had a rage for theatricals, and accordingly plays were often got up at his houfe, in which he acted a part, and acquitted himfelf well. At the age nearly of fixty, he was abfurd enough to take regular leffons in finging; and often, when a courier arrived with fome important intelligence from Vienna, fome defeat perhaps, he was found before his mirror, practifing his part, difguifed as the countefs of Efcarbagnas, of Croupillac, &c. The unfavourable difpatches which he was continually receiving during the war, did not interrupt the entertainments, balls, and plays that were regularly given at his houfe. When news arrived of a French victory, it was jeftingly faid, "Well, well, "we fhall have a ball on Saturday at the ambaffa-"dor's." Catharine, enraged at this dramatic mania, one day faid, "You will find that he referves his "beft piece for the news of the entrance of the French "into Vienna."

caufe

caufe he wrote his difpatches facetioufly, made pleafant French verfes, had compofed a tragedy, and was defirous of illuftrating the genius of his country by publifhing hiftorical eulogies of the great men of Ruffia. This was prince Belofelfky, envoy at the court of Turin, a man of tafte and merit, who had expended a fortune in patronifing the arts, and much of his time in cultivating them himfelf*.

If we except the travels of the celebrated Pallas, the hiftorical refearches of the induftrious Müller, and fome other works upon natural hiftory, no literary production worthy of being noticed has diftinguifhed Ruffia during the reign of

* He is known by feveral poetical productions, and particularly by an Epiftle to the French, in which he appears to be a Frenchman himfelf; and Voltaire wrote him a very flattering letter, and paid him the fame compliment which he had paid before to the celebrated author of the Epiftle to Ninon.

Catharine.

Catharine*. Natural hiſtory and mathematics are the only ſciences which the Ruſſians have contributed in ſome meaſure to advance; and even thoſe, however trifling, have been by the help of Germans†; yet no country is ſo fortunately ſituated

* It is the ſame Müller who wrote ſo judicious a critique of the pretended hiſtory of Peter I. and of whom Voltaire ſaid, "He is a German: I wiſh him "more wit, and fewer conſonants." Voltaire was aſtoniſhed that the Ruſſians ſhould pretend to know their own names, and the names of their towns, better than the dictionary of Martiniene, and ſhould complain at ſeeing them crippled. He perſiſted in writing Roumanou, Schouvalou, &c. inſtead of Romanof and Schuvalof. He would never write th Ruſſian names as they were pronounced; yet, to ſhew us that he was acquainted with a ſingle Chineſe one, he had often the affectation to write Confutzée, where we ſhould ſay Confucius.

† Many celebrated men of letters in Germany, as Klinger for inſtance, who has a bold and cauſtic mind, and Kotzebue, a dramatic author, whoſe plagiariſms often diſgrace his talents, wrote in Ruſſia; but they took care, particularly the former, how they publiſhed their works in that country. Kotzebue, however, deſerved to be pardoned for his good performances,

situated for rendering the sciences the most essential services. Natural and ancient history might expect from her the most astonishing discoveries. The ruins of twenty cities attest that Tartary and Mongolia were once inhabited by polished nations, and the monuments which are still discovering would have realised the sublime conceptions of Buffon and Bailli. Whole libraries have been discovered under the ruins of Ablai-Kitt, and amid the ruinous heaps that skirt the Irtish. Thousands of manuscripts in unknown languages, and many others in the language of the Chinese, the Kalmucs, and the Mantschoux, are perishing in the mouldy deserted cabinets

ances, for the sake of his Langhans, a bad imitation of Candide, and his translation of the works of Derjawin, and his Flight to Paris. The topographical and statistical works of the elegant Storch would also have merited an exception, had he dared to publish them as they were written.

of the academy: had they remained under the ruins till a government or people less barbarous had brought them to light, they would have been better preserved.

The best history of Russia is certainly that of Lévêque. Catharine detested this work as much as she did that of the abbé Chappe; and she bestowed the most extraordinary pains, scrutinising the ancient chronicles, that she might discover in this estimable historian some blunders and mistakes: because he had the courage (it is now twenty years ago) to point out the murderer of Peter III. and of Ivan. In other respects, Lévêque has merited the thanks of the Russian nation; for he is the only writer who, by his talents, labour, and perseverance, has succeeded in rendering a history, so disgusting and detached as is that of Russia till the reign of Peter I. in some degree interesting to

foreigners*. But who will one day worthily write the hiſtory of Catharine†? In our days, hiſtory has hitherto been a collection only of choſen events, artfully wrought up ſo as to give relief to a few individuals, and form a picture that ſhall be ſtriking to the eye. Facts

* Thoſe who would attempt to ſurpaſs him, inſtead of badly criticiſing his work, as *Le Clerc* has done, ſhould reſide ten years in Ruſſia, learning the language, ſtudying the manners, conſulting the ancient annals of the country, the hiſtories of Taliſchef, of prince Scherbatof, and eſpecially the immenſe materials left by Müller, Bachmeiſter, &c.

† This will be ſome Ruſſian, and I know one or two competent to the taſk: but he muſt quit his country to write it. Meanwhile a foreigner, ignorant of perſons, manners, and places, may collect together ſome hiſtorical traits, give them a form half real, half fabulous, and call his work a Hiſtory of Catharine II. But this will be no hiſtory. Were the emperor of China the ſubject, ſuch accounts might ſatisfy me. However, the anonymous author to whom I allude, has obtained, reſpecting certain epochs, ſome good materials; but if thoſe from whom he received them had read the work before it was printed, fewer errors, as to perſons, places, and dates, would be found in it.

that

that admit of no diſpute are pearls and garnets, which the hiſtorian ſelects at his pleaſure, and threads on a black ſtring or a white, as ſhall beſt ſuit the complexion of his work: truth never appears but when it is convenient. Even the author of the Hiſtory of Charles XII. of Peter I. and of the Age of Louis XIV. was of opinion, that it was of greater importance to ſay things uſeful than things that are true, as if what was falſe could ever be uſeful! And in a letter to count Schuvalof, he ſays, " Waiting till I have *leiſure to* " *methodiſe the terrible event of the death* " *of the tzarevitch*, I have began another " work." Is this the language of an hiſtorian and philoſopher? Alas! if you have not the courage to aſſert the truth, why do you not abandon the pen of hiſtory? It is in a tragedy only, or an epic poem, that the licence can be pardoned, of *arranging a terrible event*. The

end

end of hiſtory is not to celebrate an individual, but to inſtruct the people, and give a leſſon to governments.

Previous to the death of Catharine, the monuments of her reign reſembled already ſo many wrecks and dilapidations: codes, colonies, education, eſtabliſhments, manufactories, edifices, hoſpitals*, canals, towns, fortreſſes, everything had been begun, and everything given up before it was finiſhed. As ſoon as a project entered her head, all preceding ones gave place, and her thoughts were fixed on that alone, till a new idea aroſe to draw off her attention. She abandoned her code, to drive the Turks out of Europe.

* One hoſpital, however, founded by Catharine, deſerves to be mentioned as a characteriſtic eſtabliſhment. It is deſtined for the reception of fifty ladies infected with a certain diſeaſe. No queſtion is aſked, either as to the name or quality of thoſe who preſent themſelves, and they are treated with equal care, reſpect, and diſcretion. This laſt word is even marked on the linen appointed for their uſe.

After

After the glorious peace of Kaïnardgi, ſhe appeared for awhile to attend to the interior adminiſtration of her affairs, but all was preſently forgotten, that ſhe might be queen of Tauris. Her next project was the re-eſtabliſhment of the throne of Conſtantine: to which ſucceeded that of humbling and puniſhing the king of Sweden. Afterwards the invaſion of Poland became her ruling paſſion; and ſo imperiouſly did it faſcinate her, that a ſecond Pugatſhef might have arrived at the gates of Peterſburg without inducing her to relinquiſh her hold. She died, again meditating the deſtruction of Sweden, the ruin of Pruſſia, and mortified at the ſucceſs of French republicaniſm. Thus was ſhe inceſſantly led away by ſome new paſſion ſtill ſtronger in its influence than the preceding one, and thus neglected her government both in its whole and its parts.

Medals have been ſtruck in honor of numerous buildings which have never yet been conſtructed; and, among others, the marble church, which, undertaken ſome twenty years ago, is ſtill on the ſtocks. The ſhells of other edifices, which have never been finiſhed, appear like ſo many ruins; and Peterſburg is encumbered with the rubbiſh of a variety of large manſions fallen to decay before they have been inhabited. The projectors and architects have pocketed the money; and Catharine, having the plan or medal in her cabinet, concluded the undertaking to be finiſhed, and thought of it no more.

The Peterſburg almanac gives a liſt of upwards of two hundred and forty towns founded by Catharine,—a number inferior, perhaps, to what have been deſtroyed by her armies; but theſe towns are merely ſo many paltry hamlets, that have changed their name and quality by an

immennoi ukaſe, or ſupreme order of her imperial majeſty: ſome of them even are nothing more than poſts driven into the ground, containing their name, and delineating their ſcite; yet, without waiting till they ſhall be finiſhed, and particularly till they ſhall be peopled, they figure in the map as if they were the capitals of ſo many provinces *.

Prince Potemkin has actually built ſome towns, and conſtructed ſome ports in

* Catharine built, at an enormous expence, near Tzarſko-ſelo, the town of Sophaia, the boundaries of which are immenſe; but the houſes are already tumbling down, and have never been inhabited. If ſuch be the lot of a town placed immediately before her eyes, what muſt be the fate of thoſe cities founded by her in the remote deſerts? But the moſt abſurd town that exiſts is unqueſtionably that of Gatſhina, of which Paul has the honor to be founder. Theſe perſonages look upon men as ſtorks, who are caught by placing a wheel on the top of a houſe, or on a belfrey. But all theſe forced erections, from the ſuperb Potſdam to the contemptible Gatſhina, tend to prove that the real founders of cities are cultivation, commerce, and freedom.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS[VATI MAHAL LIBRARY]

in the Crimea. They are fine cages, but they have no birds; and ſuch as might be allured thither would ſhortly die of chagrin, if they had not the power of flying away. The Ruſſian government is ſubjugating and oppreſſive; the Ruſſian character warlike and deſolating. Tauris, ſince it was conquered, has become a deſert*.

This

* A friend of mine, a man of learning, was travelling in Tauris under the protection of government, for the purpoſe of inveſtigating the country. One day he arrived at the habitation of a Tatar, who led a patriarchal life, and treated him with becoming hoſpitality. My friend, perceiving that his hoſt was dejected, aſked him the cauſe of his ſadneſs: "Alas! "I have great reaſon," ſaid he. "May I not be "permitted to know it?"—"The Ruſſian ſoldiers, "who are in the neighbourhood, come every day and "cut down my fruit-trees, that ſerve me both for ſhade "and nouriſhment, to burn them; and ſhortly my "bald head will be expoſed to the burning heat of "the ſun"—"Why do you not complain of this "treatment to their chief?"—"I have done ſo."— "Well!"—"He told me that I ſhould be paid two "rubles a foot for ſuch as they had already cut down,

"and

This mania of Catharine, to ſketch everything and complete nothing, drew from Joſeph II. a very ſhrewd and ſatirical remark. During his travels in Tauris, he was invited by her to place the ſecond ſtone of a town, of which ſhe had herſelf, with great parade, laid the firſt. On his return, he ſaid, "I have finiſhed in a ſingle day a very "important buſineſs with the empreſs of "Ruſſia: ſhe has laid the firſt ſtone of a "city, and I have laid the laſt."

Of all the monuments erected by her at Peterſburg that will remain as long as they ſhall not be ſwallowed up by the ſwamps, are the ſuperb quay of the Neva, and the equeſtrian ſtatue of

"*and the ſame for as many as they may cut down here-* "*after.* But I do not want their money. Ah! let "me at leaſt die in peace under the ſhadow of the "trees which my fathers have planted! or if this "will not be, then muſt I follow my unhappy bre- "thren, and flee my country, as they have been com- "pelled to do before me:" and the tears trickled down the beard of this venerable patriarch.

Peter

Peter I.* The laſt, however beautiful, is greatly inferior to the accounts which hyperbolical travellers have given of it. The following verſes from Delille may be applied to it:

Du haut d'un vrai rocher, ſa demeure ſauvage,
La nature ſe rit de ces rocs contrefaits.

"On a wild rock nature contemptuous ſits,
"And laughs to ſcorn theſe idle counterfeits."

The idea of placing the great tzar upon a ſtupendous and rugged rock, over which he had climbed, was certainly new and ſublime; but it has been badly executed. The rock was brought from Finland to the bank of the Neva with infinite labour; was twenty-one feet in height,

* D'Orbeil addreſſed ſome verſes to Catharine, in which was the following handſome quatrain:

C'eſt par tes ſoins que le bronze reſpire
Sur ce rocher de Thétis aperçu,
Et que le tzar découvre ſon empire
Plus vaſte encore qu'il ne l'avoit conçu.

"'Twas thou that bid yon rock-built ſtatue's pride
"In breathing bronze o'erlook the diſtant main;
"Surveying hence his realms extended wide,
"The tzar ſtill wonders at his vaſt domain."

height, forty in length, and covered with moſs ſeveral inches thick, which muſt have long been accumulating. It was deprived of its wild and primitive form to give it a more regular appearance; and, what with hewing and poliſhing, was at laſt reduced in ſize nearly one half; ſo that it is now a little rock under a great horſe, and the tzar, who ought to be ſurveying from it his empire, more vaſt even than he had conceived, is hardly able to look into the firſt floor of the neighbouring houſes. By another abſurdity, Peter appears in the long Ruſſian coat, which he particularly diſliked, and obliged his ſubjects to quit and to ſhorten. If this ſtatue had a pedeſtal proportionate to its ſize, it would be an admirable performance.

A picture of Peterſburg and its manners under the reign of Catharine, written in the ſpirit of the Picture of Paris by the penetrating Mercier, would

would be a moſt intereſting performance. But this, like all works of genius, has produced none but bad imitations, from the complete and perfect deſcription of Berlin by Nicolai, to that which a profeſſor Georgi has given of Peterſburg: they are all, too, as poor in ideas, and as deſtitute of utility, as they are replete with minuteneſſes and details. Count Anhalt has given in the ſame way a deſcription of the imperial houſe of the Cadets, of which he was director-general; in which he tells us how many ſtair-caſes, ſtairs, windows, doors, and chimnies there are in this immenſe building. This may do well for a perſon deſirous to contract for the cleaning of this edifice; but what inſtruction does it convey to the public * ?

M. Storch,

* This deſcription of Peterſburg is even erroneous in its details. The author of theſe memoirs has the honor of being mentioned in it among the literary characters then reſident in the city; but, by a ſtrange confuſion of names,

M. Storch, an induſtrious and well-informed young man, a Livonian, has publiſhed a work under the title of a *Picture of Peterſburg*, which ought not to be confounded with the inſignificant ones of which I have been ſpeaking; but it reſembles Peterſburg as the portrait of Lampi reſembled Catharine: it is too much in the Chineſe mode, and without ſhadings, as he himſelf preſented it. Storch, however, only wanted one thing to render it perfect,—an opportunity of writing it in any other country than Ruſſia. He dedicated it to Catharine, who rewarded the author for his flattering delineations; but ſhe afterwards expreſſed her diſſatisfaction at his having adopted the French characters, when

names, titles, and works, general Meliſſino, major M**, and his brother, are made one and the ſame perſonage; yet the writer was actually at Peterſburg, and knew theſe men. After this, what faith can be placed in deſcriptions?

writing

writing in German his *Statiſtical Pictures*, another work which gives ſome very accurate information as to the political ſtate of Ruſſia.

Peterſburg, ſome parts of which are ſingularly magnificent and beautiful, does not badly reſemble the ſketch of a grand picture, in which are already delineated a face ſimilar to that of the Apollo Belvidere, and an eye ſuch as would be given to Genius, while the reſt is a chaos of unfiniſhed ſtrokes or of dotted lines.

As Peterſburg is inhabited by colonies of different nations, nothing can be more heterogeneous than its manners and cuſtoms; and, in general, it is difficult to aſcertain what is the prevailing taſte or faſhion. The French tongue ſerves as the connecting tie between theſe various people, but many other languages are equally ſpoken. If a company be numerous, you will find in turn three lan-

guages ufed, the Ruffian, the French, and the German; and it is not uncommon, in the fame fociety, to hear Greeks, Italians, Englifh, Hollanders, and Afiatics, all converfing in their own dialect.

In Peterfburg, the Germans are artifts and mechanics, particularly taylors and fhoemakers; the Englifh, faddlers and merchants; the Italians, architects, fingers, and venders of images; but it is difficult to fay what the French are. The greater part change their occupation every year: one arrives a lacquey, is made *outfchitel* (a tutor), and becomes a counfellor; others have been feen actors, managers, fhopkeepers, muficians, and officers, in turn. There is no place fo convenient as Peterfburg for obferving how inconftant, enterprifing, ingenious, and adapted for everything, is the French character.

To afcertain the manners and cuftoms of each nation diftinctly, you muft fee them in their houfes—in the ftreet they

all appear like Ruſſians. The French play off their witticiſms, ſup gaily, and ſing ſome old ballads of their country, which they have not forgotten: the Engliſh dine at five o'clock, drink punch, and talk of commerce: the Italians practiſe muſic, dance, make grimaces and geſtures, and the ſubjects of their converſation are the theatres and the arts: in the houſes of the Germans, you talk of ſcience, ſmoke, diſpute, eat heartily, and more than you like, from the abundance of their compliments: in thoſe of the Ruſſians you have everything indiſcriminately, and eſpecially gaming, which is the ſoul of their parties and pleaſures; but it does not exclude any of the other amuſements. A foreigner, and particularly a Frenchman, after winding along the inhoſpitable ſhores of Pruſſia, and traverſing the wild and uncultivated plains of Livonia, is ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and rapture at finding again, in the midſt of

a vaſt deſert, a large and magnificent city, in which the ſociality, amuſements, arts, and luxury, abound, which he had ſuppoſed nowhere to exiſt but in Paris.

In a climate like that of Peterſburg, where are ſcarcely a few weeks of fine weather during the whole year, and under a government like that of Ruſſia, where politics, morals, and literature are excluded, the pleaſures of ſociety muſt be very contracted, and the enjoyments of domeſtic life proportionably increaſed. The luxury, however, and ſtudied conveniences, the ſplendor and good taſte of the apartments, the profuſion and delicacies of the table, the cheerfulneſs and frivolity of the converſation, repay the man of pleaſure for the conſtraint in which nature and the government hold both his body and his mind. Of balls and entertainments there is an infinite ſucceſſion; and every day he is probably invited to ſome feaſt, where

he finds in a ſpacious houſe chefs d'œuvres of all the arts, and the productions of every country, brought together; and frequently even, in the midſt of winter, the gardens, the fruits, and flowers of ſpring.

Tzarſko-ſelo is an immenſe and dreary palace, begun by Anne, finiſhed by Elizabeth, inhabited by Catharine, and forſaken by Paul. Its ſituation is a ſwamp, the country round it a deſert, and the gardens are dull and weariſome. The monuments with which it has been adorned by Catharine, like the buildings at Peterſburg, are ſo many emblems of her character. By the ſide of obeliſks, roſtral columns and triumphal arches erected to the Orlofs, Romanzofs, and Ruſſian warriors, who ſubjected the Archipelago, and for a moment reconquered Macedon, are ſeen tombs conſecrated to ſome of her favourite dogs; and not far from theſe is the mauſoleum erected

to

to the amiable Lanſkoï, the moſt beloved of her favourites, and the only one whom death tore from her embraces. Theſe are records certainly of very different ſervices, moſt familiarly placed together. Are we from this to imagine that a dog, a lover, and an hero, were of equal importance in the eyes of the imperial Catharine? Theſe monuments, however, will ſhortly diſappear in the dreary ſwamps which ſerve for their foundation.

The Egyptians, who obliged the people they conquered to labour, and the Romans, who ſtripped every nation to embelliſh Rome, executed ſome immenſe works. The free Greeks diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the taſte and elegance, rather than the magnitude of their buildings; and Ruſſia was lately the only ſtate that could undertake thoſe aſtoniſhing edifices which we ſo much admire in antiquity; becauſe in Ruſſia the men are ſlaves, and, as in Egypt, coſt only a few onions.

onions. It is for this reaſon we ſee in Moſco and Peterſburg ſuch gigantic edifices. Meanwhile there is not ſo much as a road to unite theſe two capitals, which are only diſtant about two hundred leagues from each other. This alſo was one of the abortive projects of Catharine; for the road ſhe begun is an incumbrance, and renders travelling ſtill more tireſome and impracticable than before. But Catharine preferred expending two or three millions of rubles in building a gloomy marble palace for her favourite, to the forming a road: this latter was too common an undertaking for her genius*.

* Paul, ſo far from finiſhing the moſt uſeful of thoſe labours begun by his mother, as the quays, canals, and high roads, has built, in his turn, churches and palaces, though there were already more than enough of both in Peterſburg. But the monuments he has erected in greateſt number, are houſes for military exerciſe, barracks, guard-houſes, and particularly centry boxes. Happily, however, all theſe conſtructions are of wood, and will hardly outlaſt their founder.

O Catha-

O Catharine! dazzled by thy greatness, of which I have had a near view; charmed with thy beneficence, which rendered so many individuals happy; seduced by the thousand amiable qualities that have been admired in thee, I would fain have erected a monument to thy glory: but torrents of blood flow in upon me, and inundate my design: the chains of thirty millions of slaves ring in my ears, and deafen me; the crimes which have reigned in thy name call forth my indignation. I throw away my pen, and exclaim, "Let there "be henceforth no glory without virtue! "Let injustice and depravity be transmit-"ted with no other laurels to posterity "than the snakes of Nemesis!"

CHAP. III.

OF THE FAVOURITES.

Their office made a distinct place at court—The Empress's generosity in this point—Installation of Zubof—List of the twelve who enjoyed in succession the title of favourite—Little Hermitage—Little Society.

ELIZABETH of England, Mary of Scotland, Christina of Sweden, all the empresses of Russia, and most women who have been their own mistresses, have had favourites or lovers. To consider this as a crime might be thought too rigid and ungallant. Catharine II. alone, however, availed herself of her power to exhibit to the world an example, of which

which there is to be found no model, by making the office of favourite a place at court, with an apartment, ſalary, honours, prerogatives, and, above all, its peculiar functions; and of all places there was not one, the duties of which were ſo ſcrupulouſly fulfilled: a ſhort abſence, a temporary ſickneſs of the perſon by whom it was occupied, was ſometimes ſufficient to occaſion his removal. Nor perhaps was there any poſt, in which the empreſs diſplayed more choice and diſcernment: I believe no inſtance occurred of its having been filled by a perſon incapable of it; and, except the interregnum between Lanſkoï and Yermolof, it was never twenty-four hours vacant.

Twelve favourites ſucceeded each other in this place, which became the firſt of the ſtate. Several of theſe favourites, confining themſelves to the principal duty it preſented, and having little merit, except the performing

forming that duty well, had ſcarcely any influence except within the immediate ſphere of their peculiar department. Some, however, diſplayed ambition, audacity, and, above all, ſelf-ſufficiency; obtained vaſt influence, and preſerved an aſcendancy over the mind of Catharine after having loſt her heart; while others continued to retain her friendſhip and gratitude, and when diſmiſſed from their perſonal attendance on the empreſs, were thought worthy of ſerving the empire in public offices.

It is a very remarkable feature in the character of Catharine, that none of her favourites incurred her hatred or her vengeance, though ſeveral of them offended her, and their quitting their office did not depend on herſelf. No one was ever ſeen to be puniſhed, no one to be perſecuted. Thoſe whom ſhe diſcarded went into foreign countries, to diſplay

her

her presents, and dissipate her treasures, after which they returned, to enjoy her liberalities with tranquillity in the bosom of their country, though their terrible mistress could have crushed them in a moment. In this respect Catharine certainly appears superior to all other women. Was it greatness of mind, or defect of passion? 'Perhaps she never knew love; perhaps she still respected in her lovers the favours with which she had honoured them.

Soltikof, Orlof, and Lanskoï, were all of whom she was deprived by death; the rest surviving her love, though they might have exposed her weaknesses, still possessed in quiet places or wealth, which rendered them objects of envy to the whole empire. She contented herself with dismissing Korsakof, whom she surprised even in her own apartments with one of her maids of honour; and she re-

signed

ſigned Momonof to a young rival. Aſſuredly theſe are very extraordinary features, and very rare, in a woman, a lover, an empreſs. This great and generous conduct is far removed from that of an Elizabeth of England, who cut off the heads of her favourites and her rivals; and from that of a Chriſtina of Sweden, who cauſed one of her lovers to be aſſaſſinated in her preſence.

But Catharine, with all the genius and underſtanding which ſhe evinced, notwithſtanding the exterior decency ſhe affected, muſt have thoroughly known and deſpiſed the Ruſſians, ſince ſhe ventured ſo frequently to place by her ſide young men taken from the people, and hold them up to receive the reſpect and homage of the whole nation, without any other title to this diſtinction than one for which ſhe ought to have bluſhed.

It

It will be sufficient to relate how Zubof, her last favourite, was installed, to shew my indignant readers in what manner these affairs were managed.

Plato * Zubof was a young lieutenant in the horse-guards, patronised by Nicholas Soltikof, to whom he was a distant relation, and to whom my friend, who furnished me with part of these memoirs, was at that time *aide-de-camp*. In this post he frequently found himself by the side of Zubof, and even sought this advantage at table. Zubof spoke French fluently; he had had some education, was of a polite and pliant disposition, could converse a little on literary subjects, and had learned music. He was of a middle size, but supple, muscular, and well made. He had a

* This name led the courtiers to say, that Catharine ended with Platonic love.

high

high and intelligent forehead, and fine eyes, and his countenance had not that air of coldneſs and ſeverity mixed with vanity, which it afterwards aſſumed. When the empreſs went to Tzarſko-ſelo, in the ſpring of 1789, he ſolicited from his patron the favour of being appointed to command the detachment that attended her, and having obtained it, dined with Catharine. The court had ſcarcely arrived, when the rupture with Momonof took place. This favourite was married and diſmiſſed. Zubof was the only young officer in ſight; and it appears, that he was indebted rather to this fortunate circumſtance, than to the deliberate choice of Catharine, for the preference he obtained. Potemkin being abſent, Nicholas Soltikof, at that time in high credit, introduced and ſerved the young Zubof with ſo much the more zeal, hoping to find in him a protector againſt the haughty Potemkin, whom

whom he heartily diſliked. After ſome ſecret conferences in preſence of the Mentor*, Zubof was approved, and ſent for *more ample information* to Miſs Protaſof and the empreſs's phyſician†. The account they gave muſt have been favourable, for he was named *aide-de-camp* to the empreſs, received a preſent of an hundred thouſand rubles (20,000*l.*) to furniſh himſelf with linen, and was inſtalled in the apartment of the favourites with all the cuſtomary advantages. The next day, this young man was ſeen familiarly offering his arm to his ſovereign, equipped in his new uniform, with a large hat and feather on his head, attended by his patron and the great men of the empire, who walked behind him

* He was governor to the grand-dukes, and miniſter at war.

† Miſs Protaſof was called *l'éprouveuſe*, from her functions. The phyſician to the empreſs was Mr. Rogerſon.

with

with their hats off, though the day before he had danced attendance in their antichambers.

In the evening, after her card-party was over, Catharine was ſeen to diſmiſs her court, and retire, accompanied only by her favourite.

Next day the antichambers of the new idol were filled with aged generals, and miniſters of long ſervice, all of whom bent the knee before him. He was a genius diſcerned by the piercing eye of Catharine; the treaſures of the empire were laviſhed on him, and the conduct of the empreſs was ſanctioned by the meanneſs and ſhameful aſſiduities of her courtiers*.

Perhaps

* Zubof being one day hunting, ſtopped with his ſuit in the road from Peterſburg to Tzarſko-ſelo. The courtiers who were going to court, the couriers, the

Perhaps the reader may have ſome curioſity to peruſe a liſt of thoſe who enjoyed the title of favourite to Catharine, and who reigned over Ruſſia more or leſs in the name of their auguſt lover.

I. SERGIUS SOLTIKOF.

It is whiſpered that he received Catharine's firſt favours when ſhe was only grand-ducheſs; a happineſs ſaid to have been denied by nature to the unfortunate Peter III. Soltikof, beloved and happy, grew indiſcreet, and excited jealouſy. Elizabeth civilly baniſhed him from court, and he died in exile *.

the poſt, all carriages, and all the peaſants, were ſtopped: no one dared paſs till the young man thought proper to quit the road; and he ſtaid in it more than an hour, waiting for his game.

* Soltikof had all the wit, agreeableneſs, and vanity of a young Ruſſian nobleman. He was the only one of Catharine's favourites that ſhe ſelected from a powerful family. Her heart was not at that time guided by her politics.

2. STANISLAUS PONIATOFSKY

ſoon occaſioned him to be forgotten. He was at that time Poliſh envoy at Peterſburg. Handſome, gallant, and lively, he engaged the affections of the young Catharine. Peter III. ſometimes interrupted them, though he was little addicted to jealouſy, and preferred his pipe, his bottle, his ſoldiers, and his miſtreſs, to his lovely wife. It is well known that Catharine, when ſeated on the imperial throne, rewarded her lover with the crown of Poland. His diſaſtrous reign evinced, that love, when it beſtows a crown, is as blind, as favour when it diſtributes places and honours. Staniſlaus was the moſt amiable of men, but the weakeſt of kings. How was it poſſible that ſo puſillanimous a being ſhould for a moment have gained the eſteem of Europe? Yet by whom was he

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

he not admired? How contradictory was his conduct, compared with his sentiments and his language! At the last diet, the generous nuncio Kamar said to him publicly on perceiving him waver, "What, "sire! are you no longer the same who "said to us, when signing the constitution "of the 3d of May, 'May my hand "perish rather than it should subscribe "anything contrary to this?' All Eu-"rope charges you with being Catha-"rine's king: justify her at least for hav-"ing put the sceptre into your hand, "by showing that you are capable of "wielding it*." Yet but a few days

* This brave Pole was interrupted in the midst of this spirited speech, and carried off by the Russian satellites Rothenfeld and Pistor, worthy followers of the barbarous Kretschetmikof and Kakofsky. Heavens! what names! They who bore them were still more rugged: yet these were the two men who conquered Poland in one campaign, and overturned the constitution of the 3d of May, which all the nation seemed to defend.

after

after the unworthy Stanislaus signed that compact which dismembered Poland for the second time; and by which he formally acknowledged himself factious and rebellious, for establishing a rational constitution, which gave to him, as king, more authority, and promised his nation more happiness and freedom*. If at

* He did not sign, however, without reluctance. He said to Sievers, who summoned him to repair to Grodno to head the confederates, "I will never be "guilty of such baseness. Let the empress take back "her crown: let her send me to Siberia, or leave me "to go out of my kingdom on foot, with my staff in "my hand—I will not dishonor myself." He was confined, kept fasting, threatened, and then placed himself at the head of the confederacy. It was colonel Stackelberg, nephew of Ingelstrœm, who finally brought him the treaty of partition. Stanislaus, on reading it, burst into tears, and said, "O Sir, take "pity on me! Let me not be compelled to sign my "own disgrace!" Stackelberg told him, that after this sacrifice he might enjoy a happy and tranquil old age. Wiping his eyes, he replied, "Well, I will "hope so;" but his niece entering, he again wept plenteously with her.

this period he had at leaſt abdicated his dignity, he would have excited regard. He was incapable either of remaining a king, or of ceaſing to be one: he had not even the wit and pride of Harlequin, who, when his antagoniſts were ſtruggling to get from him his wooden ſword, and he could defend it no longer, threw it on the ground, ſaying, "There, take "it!" Staniſlaus choſe rather to drag on an old age of diſgrace, and go and die at Peterſburg in a ſtate of humiliation*.

Of all the favourites of Catharine, Staniſlaus was the only one whom ſhe

* One court day after the acceſſion of the preſent emperor, Staniſlaus, who was in his train, bending under age and fatigue, was obliged to ſit down in a corner while three or four hundred courtiers were kiſſing the hand of Paul. The emperor, perceiving that the old king had ſeated himſelf during this ceremony, ſent an *aide-de-camp* to him, to order him to keep on his legs.

took

took pleaſure in humbling, after having exalted. Loyalty and patriotiſm, which appeared for an inſtant to contend with gratitude and ſubmiſſion in the heart of the king, were crimes in the eye of the haughty tzaritza. She was indulgent in love, but implacable in politics: ambition was her ruling paſſion, yet ſhe always made the lover ſubſervient to the empreſs.

3. GREGORY ORLOF,

who enjoyed ſuch long and diſtinguiſhed favour, and whoſe hiſtory is ſo intimately connected with that of Catharine, ſeemed to ſhare with her the throne on which he had placed her*. He enjoyed all the power

* If no mention be made of the revolution of 1762 in theſe Memoirs, it is becauſe Europe is made ſufficiently acquainted with it by the hiſtory left by Rhulières, which agrees in every point with what is univerſally known and believed at preſent. I have repeatedly

power and honours united, which were afterwards ſeen to adorn Potemkin, and burden Zubof. He had much of the haughtineſs and firmneſs of Potemkin. Though he was young and robuſt, his brother Alexius, a Hercules in ſtrength and Goliah in ſtature*, was aſſociated with him in his office. The empreſs was then in the bloom of life. She avowedly had a ſon by Gregory, who was named Baſil

repeatedly heard the particulars in Ruſſia from perſons who were actors in the buſineſs, and they were very nearly the ſame with thoſe which I have ſince read in Rhulières.

* It was this Alexius Orlof, who, with Paſſick and Baratinſky, was concerned in the death of Peter III. He afterwards rendered himſelf famous by his expeditions in the Archipelago, and particularly by the battle of Tcheſme, from which he received the ſurname of Tcheſminſky. His infamy in carrying off from Italy a daughter of the empreſs Elizabeth, ſerved to render him completely odious and execrable, in ſpite of his uſurped laurels. He is at preſent baniſhed to Germany, where he endeavours in vain to obtain notice by his luxury and expenſive manner of living. He is avoided and deteſted.

Gregorie-

Gregorievitch Bobrinſky, and educated in the corps of cadets; admiral Ribas, then tutor to that corps, being afterwards appointed his governor*. Two pretty maids of honour, whom Protaſof, firſt *femme-de-chambre*, educated as her nieces, are likewiſe reputed to be Catharine's daughters by Orlof. It was for this celebrated favorite ſhe erected the gloomy marble palace, the inſcription on which informed all the world that it was erected by grateful friendſhip. In honor of him likewiſe ſhe ordered a large medal to be ſtruck, on occaſion of the journey he took to Moſco to reeſtabliſh order, and being particularly

* This Bobrinſky ſtrongly reſembles his mother in the face, and whoever ſees the head of Catharine on a ruble, may ſee the likeneſs of her ſon. He has diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his diſorderly life, though he has ſenſe, and is not devoid of information. He was baniſhed to Eſthonia, but Paul recalled him at his acceſſion, and made him a major in the horſe-guards. Not long after, however, he fell into diſgrace.

inſtru-

inſtrumental in ſtopping the dreadful ravages of the plague. On this medal he is repreſented as Curtius, leaping into the gulf, with this inſcription: *Ruſſia too can boaſt ſuch ſons.* The palace of Gatſhina, now inhabited by Paul, is another monument to prince Orlof. Twelve years intimacy, added to the haughtineſs of this lover, at length wearied his ſovereign, now firmly eſtabliſhed on the throne; and, after a long conteſt, Potemkin bore off the laurel. The triumph of his rival, and the inconſtancy of Catharine, whom he openly accuſed of ingratitude, had ſuch an effect on him, that his health was deſtroyed, his mind deranged, and the once proud, powerful, and magnificent Orlof died in the moſt horrible ſtate of inſanity and human infirmity*.

* Many aſſert that Potemkin poiſoned him with an herb, which poſſeſſes the quality of turning the brain, and which the Ruſſians call *piannaïa trava*, "drunkard's plant."

4. VASSILTSCHIKOF,

whom Panin introduced during an absence of Orlof, filled up the interval that took place between the two haughty rivals. He was merely the tool of Catharine's pleasures.

5. POTEMKIN

came one day, and boldly seized on the apartments of his predecessor; thus proclaiming his victory, by making himself master of the field of battle, so long disputed against him. His love, his valour, and his colossal stature, had charmed Catharine. He was the only one of her favourites who dared become enamoured of her, and to make the first advances. It appeared that he was truly and romantically

tically captivated by her*. He firft adored his fovereign as a miftrefs, and then cherifhed her as his glory. Thefe two great characters feemed formed for each other: their affection was mutual; and when they ceafed to love, they ftill continued to efteem each other: politics and ambition united them, when Love had diffolved his bands.

* There is a Ruffian fong of his extant, beginning *Kakfkoroia tebe vidal*, &c. which he compofed when firft in love. It breathes fentiment, and deferves to be tranflated. The following is the fenfe of what I recollect of it: "As foon as I beheld thee, I thought of "thee alone: thy lovely eyes captivated me, yet I "trembled to fay I loved. To thee, Love fubjects every "heart, and enchains them with the fame flowers. "But, O heavens! what torment, to love one to whom "I dare not declare it! one who can never be mine! "Cruel gods! why have you given her fuch charms? "or why did you exalt her fo high? Why did you "deftine me to love her, and her alone? her, whofe "facred name will never pafs my lips, whofe charming "image will never quit my heart!" &c.

I leave

I leave to travellers the office of deſcribing the pomp of his entertainments, the laborious luxury of his houſe, and the value of his diamonds; and to German ſcribblers, to relate how many bank-notes he had bound up as books in his library, and what he paid for the cherries, a plate of which he was accuſtomed to preſent every new year's day to his auguſt ſovereign; or the coſt of his ſturgeon ſoup, which was his favourite diſh; or how many hundred miles he would ſend a courier for a melon, or a noſegay, to preſent to one of his miſtreſſes*. They

* Potemkin had in his ſuit an officer of high rank, named Bauer, whom he ſent ſometimes to Paris for a dancer, then to Aſtrakan for a water-melon; now to Poland, to carry orders to his tenants; to Peterſburg, to carry news to Catharine; or to the Crimea, to gather grapes. This officer, who thus ſpent his life travelling poſt, requeſted an epitaph to be ready for him in caſe he ſhould break his neck, and one of his friends gave him the following:

Cy git Bauer ſous ce rocher;
Fouelle, cocher!
"Here Bauer lies, beneath this ſtone;
"Coachman, drive on!"

who

who wiſh to ſee a characteriſtic portrait of him, may find one drawn in a ſuperior manner in the work intitled *Hiſtoire de Catharine* II.; as the particulars of Potemkin's life would carry me too far. Beſides, one of my friends who attended him in his campaigns is at preſent employed on the ſubject, and is more capable of ſatisfying the curioſity of the public reſpecting this extraordinary man.

He created, deſtroyed, or confuſed, yet animated everything. When abſent, he alone was the ſubject of converſation; when preſent, he engaged every eye. The nobles, who deteſted him, and who made ſome figure when he was with the army, ſeemed at his ſight to ſink into nothingneſs, and to be annihilated before him. The prince de Ligne, who was his tale-bearer and flatterer*, ſaid, "There "is

* He told him, in one of his letters, which the prince's vanity induced him to make no ſecret: "Your "auguſt

"is ſomething barbarouſly romantic in "his character:" and he ſpoke the truth. His death left an immenſe void in the empire, and that death was as extraordinary as his life. He had ſpent nearly a year at Peterſburg, indulging in all kinds of pleaſure, and even debauchery, forgetting his glory, and diſplaying his wealth and influence with inſulting pomp. He received the greateſt men of the empire as footmen, ſcarcely deigned to notice the grand-duke, and ſometimes entered Catharine's apartments with his legs bare, his hair about his ears, and in a morning gown. Old marſhal Repnin availed himſelf of his abſence from the army to beat the Turks, and force them to de-

"auguſt and amiable ſovereign is indebted to you for "more marks of gallantry than Louis XIV. was to "all his courtiers together." The ſurmiſe, however, was wrong. The duke de la Feuillade erected a ſuperb ſtatue to his maſter at his own expenſe. Potemkin never paid Catharine a compliment equal to this.

mand peace, doing more in two months than Potemkin had done in three years. The latter, who wiſhed ſtill to prolong the war, was rouſed at the news, and ſet off *; but he carried death in his veins. On his arrival at Jaſſy, where his head-quarters had long been eſtabliſhed, or, to ſpeak more properly, his capital and his court, he was gloomy, melancholy, conſumed with vexation, and impatient under his diſeaſe. He determined to wreſtle with it, and overcome

* His interview with Repnin was an amuſing ſcene: "You little martiniſt prieſt (1)," ſaid he, "how "dared you undertake ſo many things in my abſence? "Who gave thee any ſuch orders?" Repnin, enraged at this ſpeech, and emboldened by ſucceſs, dared for once behave to him with firmneſs. "I have ſerved my "country, he anſwered: my head is not at thy diſpo-"ſal, and thou art a devil whom I defy." Saying this, he went out of the room in a rage, ſhutting the door on Potemkin, who followed him with his clenched fiſt. The two heroes of Ruſſia were within an ace of going to loggerheads together.

(1) Repnin was a zealous Martiniſt.

it

it by his iron conſtitution: he laughed at his phyſicians, and ate ſalt meat and raw turnips. His diſeaſe grew worſe: he would be conveyed to Otchakof, his beloved conqueſt; but he had ſcarcely advanced a few miles, before the air of his carriage ſeemed to ſtifle him. His cloak was ſpread by the road-ſide; he was laid on it, and there expired in the arms of his niece Branicka, who accompanied him. Catharine fainted three times when ſhe heard of his death: it was neceſſary to bleed her: ſhe was thought to be dying. She expreſſed almoſt as much grief as at the death of Lanſkoï: but it was not the lover ſhe regretted; it was the friend, whoſe genius was aſſimilated with her own, whom ſhe conſidered as the ſupport of her throne, and the executor of her vaſt projects. Catharine, holding an uſurped ſceptre, was a woman, and timid: ſhe was accuſtomed to behold in Potem-

kin a protector, whofe fortune and glory were intimately connected with her own. She appeared to feel herfelf again a ftranger; fhe began to fear her fon, and now took for her fupport her grandfon Alexander, who was juft rifing out of infancy, with intent to oppofe him to his father.

What a contraft, what a leffon, does the death of the three greateft perfonages in Ruffia offer! Orlof, who reigned twelve years by the fide of Catharine, died in a ftate of wretched infanity. Potemkin, the powerful, the magnificent Potemkin, the founder of fo many palaces and cities, the conqueror of a kingdom, expired on the road-fide; and Catharine herfelf fell down in her water-clofet, and died on the floor with a lamentable fhriek!

The wealth of Potemkin has been exaggerated: it was far fhort of that of

Ment-

Mentchikof, and ſtill leſs of what the unworthy Biren amaſſed. Even the laſt favourite poſſeſſed more. It is true Potemkin had immediate acceſs to the treaſures of the ſtate; but he alſo ſpent a great deal for the ſtate, and ſhewed himſelf as much grand-prince of Ruſſia as favorite of Catharine. Zubof had equal command over the public treaſury, and never expended a ruble for the public.

Potemkin was diſtinguiſhed from all his colleagues in not loſing the confidence of the empreſs when he no longer poſſeſſed her heart. Ambition ſucceeded love in his breaſt, and he ſtill retained all his influence, inſomuch that every ſucceeding favorite was appointed by him, and remained ſubordinate to him.

6. ZAVADOFSKY

was the man whom Potemkin preſented to Catharine, to ſucceed in fulfilling the office of private favorite. He was young, vigorous, and well made; but Catharine's inclination for him was ſoon at an end. He had been ſecretary: his diſgrace made no noiſe; he continued to be employed in the affairs of the cabinet, and was made a privy counſellor.

7. ZORITCH,

on whom the inconſtant Catharine next caſt her eye, is the only foreigner whom ſhe ventured to create favorite during her reign. He was a *Servian*, who had been taken priſoner by the Turks, and made his eſcape from Conſtantinople, where he was confined as a ſlave. He appeared

appeared at court for the firſt time in the dreſs of an huſſar. His beauty dazzled every eye, and the old ladies in Ruſſia ſtill ſpeak of him as an Adonis. Protected at firſt by Potemkin, he was deſirous of ſhaking off his yoke, quarrelled with him, and challenged him to fight a duel. His mind was not ſufficiently cultivated to captivate that of Catharine, who diſmiſſed him at the end of twelve months loaded with favours. He obtained the town of Schklof, which was erected into a kind of ſovereignty for him, an inſtance ſingular of its kind in Ruſſia. There he lives as a prince, holding a court, and receiving ſtrangers. If he be enriched with the ſpoils of the ſtate, he returns part of them to it very nobly. He has founded at Schklof a corps of cadets, where two hundred young officers are educated at his expenſe. Notwithſtanding theſe occupations, and the gaming, theatrical exhibitions,

bitions, and other amuſements in which he engages, and by which he ruins himſelf, he is tired of his principality. Some years ago he is ſaid to have ſolicited permiſſion to make his appearance again: it was not granted. Paul, however, has juſt called him to court.

8. KORSAKOF,

a ſort of Ruſſian fop, was raiſed to the rank of favorite from that of ſerjeant in the guards at the palace, where Catharine noticed him. He was either faithleſs or ungrateful. Catharine herſelf ſurpriſed him in the arms of the handſome counteſs Bruce, her maid of honor and confidant. Struck with aſtoniſhment, ſhe withdrew, and would never again ſee her lover or her friend. This was the only vengeance ſhe exerciſed againſt them.

9. LANSKOI,

one of the horſe-guards, had obtained ſome reputation*. He was ſoon the moſt beloved of Catharine's lovers, and appeared moſt worthy to be ſo. He was handſome, graceful, and accompliſhed, an admirer of the arts, a friend to talents, humane, and beneficent. Every one ſeemed to ſhare the ſovereign's predilection for him. Perhaps he would have acquired as much influence by the

* All the officers who had, or thought they had, fine perſons, endeavoured on every occaſion to throw themſelves in Catharine's way. Even at court, the nobles would ſometimes give place to a handſome man, knowing that nothing pleaſed their ſovereign ſo well as to traverſe her apartments between two rows of handſome youths. It was a ſituation which men eagerly ſought after, and exhibited themſelves to the greateſt advantage; and, indeed, many families founded their hopes on ſome young relation, whom they compelled to throw himſelf in the way of ſuch good fortune.

qualities

qualities of his mind, as thoſe of his heart procured him partiſans. Potemkin feared him, and, *it is ſaid*, gave him poiſon. He died with horrible pains in his bowels. Catharine in vain laviſhed on him the moſt tender cares: her lips received his laſt breath. She ſhut herſelf up for ſeveral days, which ſhe paſſed in all the violence of grief. She accuſed heaven, would die, would ceaſe to reign, and ſwore never to love again. She really loved Lanſkoï, and her affliction turned into rage againſt the phyſician, who could not ſave him, and who was obliged to throw himſelf at his ſovereign's feet, and requeſt her pardon for the impotence of his art. A decent and afflicted widow, ſhe went into mourning for her lover, and, a new Artemiſia, erected for him a ſuperb mauſoleum near Tzarſko-ſelo. She ſuffered more than a year to elapſe before his place was again filled; but, like another Epheſian matron,

tron, ſhe gave him an unworthy ſucceſſor. This was

10. YERMOLOF,

the leaſt amiable, and leaſt ſtriking in figure of all ſhe had choſen, who was at length to conſole her for the handſome, the tender Lanſkoï. He diſpleaſed Potemkin, however, before he ceaſed to pleaſe Catharine, and the haughty prince demanded, and obtained, the diſmiſſal of this favorite, who did not continue two years in office.

11. MOMONOF,

who had diſputed the place with Yermolof, ſucceeded to it. Momonof was amiable, and his buſt was a perfect model; but he was not well made. Catharine approved and loved him, and would have done

ſo long; but he was ſoon diſguſted with the faded charms of a miſtreſs of ſixty.

He became enamoured of the young princeſs Scherbatof, and had the courage to avow it, demanding permiſſion to marry her. Catharine had pride and generoſity ſufficient to grant his requeſt, without any reproaches. She ſaw him married at court to the object of his honorable attachment, and ſent him to Moſco loaded with preſents.

12. ZUBOF.

THE riſe of this laſt favorite has been explained at the beginning of this chapter. He was not quite five-and-twenty years old, the empreſs was upwards of ſixty*. She finiſhed by treat-

ing

* Catharine was two years older than the almanac expreſſed. As ſhe was older than Peter III. Elizabeth took off theſe two years when ſhe ſent for her into

Ruſſia;

ing him as much like a child as a lover, took upon herſelf the care of his education, and grew more and more attached to her own work, which became her idol. Yet even at this advanced period of her life ſhe was ſeen to revive the orgies and lupercalia which ſhe had formerly celebrated with the brothers Orlof. Valerian, a younger brother of Zubof, and Peter Soltikof, their friend, were aſſociated in office with the favorite. With theſe three young libertines did Catharine, the aged Catharine, ſpend her days, while her armies were ſlaughtering the Turks, fighting with the Swedes, and ravaging Poland; while her people were groaning in wretchedneſs and famine, and devoured by extortioners and tyrants.

Ruſſia; and there are old German calendars, which prove that ſhe was born in 1727. This is but an opinion, however, which ſeveral diſpute, and which I have it not in my power to verify.

It was at this juncture ſhe formed a more intimate ſociety, compoſed of her favorites and moſt truſty ladies and courtiers. This ſociety met two or three times a week, under the name of the *Little Hermitage*. The parties were frequently maſqued, and the greateſt privacy prevailed. They danced, repreſented proverbs, played, joked, romped, and engaged in all ſorts of frolics and gambols *(jouoit à des jeux d'eſprit, à des jeux de gages, et à des jeux de mains)*: in ſhort, there was no kind of gaiety which was not permitted. Leof Nariſhkin acted the ſame part there as Roquelaure at the court of Louis XIV; and a fool by title, Matrona Danilofna, ſeconded him. This was an old goſſip, whoſe wit conſiſted only in uttering the moſt abſurd vulgarities; and as ſhe enjoyed the common right of fools, that of ſaying anything, ſhe was loaded with preſents by the lower order of courtiers. Such foreign miniſters

ſters as enjoyed the favor of the empreſs, were ſometimes admitted to the Little Hermitage. Segur, Cobenzel, Steding, and Naſſau, chiefly enjoyed this diſtinction; but Catharine afterwards formed another aſſembly, more confined and more myſterious, which was called the *Little Society.* The three favorites of whom we have juſt been ſpeaking, Branicka, Protaſof, and ſome confidential women and *valets-de-chambre*, were its only members. In this the Cybele of the north celebrated her moſt ſecret myſteries. The particulars of theſe amuſements are not fit to be repeated, and the public will loſe nothing worth preſerving by their remaining concealed. The author has burned all his memorandums, which could have afforded any information on the ſubject.

I might have enlarged this chapter with the ſurnames, titles, and dignities of each favorite;

favorite; but they would not be worth paper and print, and do not deſerve even to be mentioned. It is well known that Catharine, after having heaped upon her minions all the places, titles, and orders of knighthood of Ruſſia, wrote to Vienna to obtain for them ſucceſſively patents of count and prince of the Holy Roman Empire. The orders of Poland and Pruſſia bedaubed alſo the favorites of the favorites. Potemkin and Zubof, when they diſplayed all their decorations, looked like the hawkers of ribands and trinkets at a fair.

Paul is more of a Ruſſian than his mother: he is of opinion, that a count or prince of the Greek empire is ſuperior to a count or prince of the Roman empire. Under Catharine, the Ruſſian kniaz was made a German prince; under Paul, the German prince is raiſed to the dignity of a Ruſſian kniaz. I ſhall not take upon

me to decide the queſtion of precedence.

In like manner I ſhall paſs over the gifts and preſents beſtowed on the favorites. I could mention only what they have received publicly as recompenſes; and however enormous the ſum may appear*, it was not equal to the gifts laviſhed on them in ſecret. Who can calculate what the Orlofs, Potemkin, and the Zubofs received? Had they not acceſs to the imperial treaſury, without rendering any account of the ſums they took from it? and were not places, rank, juſtice, impunity, nay, even foreign alliances, peace and war, purchaſed of them and of their creatures†?

* I have a pretty accurate liſt: the ſum is greater by one third than that given in the book intitled, *Hiſtoire de Catharine II.*

† Valerian Zubof, a few months after he had ſhared with his brother the favors of Catharine, ſtaked thirty thouſand rubles (3000l.) on a ſingle card at faro; and this young man poſſeſſes, as has been obſerved, part of the immenſe domains of the dukes of Courland.

CHAP. IV.

ACCESSION OF PAUL.

Conduct and projects of Catharine with regard to her ſon—He is proclaimed—His firſt ſteps as Emperor—Funeral honors paid to his father and mother—Rigorous proceedings towards the guards—The wacht-parade—Favors and diſgraces—His occupations—Proſcription of round hats and Ruſſian harneſs—Re-eſtabliſhment of etiquette—Its ridiculous or cruel conſequences—Change in the army, and in civil affairs—Peaſants—Soldato-mania—Office of puniſhment—Finances.

ONE of the greateſt crimes of which Catharine was guilty, was her conduct to that ſon in whoſe right ſhe governed Ruſſia five-and-thirty years. In

In his infancy he evinced qualities which were ſtifled by her ill treatment. He had ſenſe, activity, a diſpoſition for the ſciences, and ſentiments of order and juſtice: but all theſe periſhed for want of being cultivated. Her diſlike towards him has been urged as a proof of his being the ſon of Peter III. and this proof is of conſiderable weight. She could not bear him, kept him at a diſtance from her, ſurrounded him with ſpies, held him in reſtraint, expoſed him to every kind of humiliation; and while her favorites, inferior to her ſon in years, governed Ruſſia and wallowed in wealth, he lived retired, inſignificant, and in want of neceſſaries. Thus ſhe ſoured his temper, and rendered him capricious and ſuſpicious. Aſſuredly a mother muſt be highly culpable who inſpires her own child with hatred and contempt. But what other ſentiments could he entertain? Not ſatiſfied with

depriv-

depriving him of the affection and prerogatives that he ought to have enjoyed as a son, she resolved to take from him likewise the rights and pleasures of a father. His wife came almost every year to lay-in at Tzarsko-selo, and left her children there in the hands of strangers. They were brought up under Catharine, without the father or mother having the least influence in their education, or authority over their conduct. Latterly, they were even whole months without seeing them. Thus she sought to alienate the hearts of these children from parents whom they scarcely knew. Here, however, Paul ceases to inspire interest; here he no longer appears the timid and respectful child, but the fearful, imbecil father. What man is base enough not to claim the sacred rights of paternity? Why had he not the spirit to say to his mother, " You have my crown;

" keep it; but reſtore me my children:
" leave me at leaſt an enjoyment which
" you do not envy in your loweſt ſlaves."
He who finds not in his heart ſufficient motives to hold ſuch language, and to act conformably to it, deſerves not praiſe as a reſpectful ſon, but rather blame as a thoughtleſs, unfeeling father*.

Death took Catharine by ſurpriſe. It is evident to thoſe who were acquainted with her court, and the unfortunate eſtrangement between the mother and ſon, that ſhe entertained a wiſh to have another ſucceſſor. The dread of reflecting on the end of her days, and on that of her reign, which ſhe feared ſtill more,

* The duke of Wurtemburg, brother to the preſent empreſs, acted in a more becoming manner. Catharine being deſirous of taking charge of his children, he declared that he would rather die than give them up. She durſt not venture to proceed to extremities, and he took them with him out of the country.

with

with the death of Potemkin*, prevented her from accomplishing this project, while she had time for it, or from confirming it by a will. The youth of the grand-duke Alexander, and still more the goodness of his head and heart, were afterwards obstacles to the execution of her design. Her predilection for the young prince, however, worthy no doubt of a purer source, was very striking; and her private conferences with him began to be frequent and mysterious. Perhaps she might in time have succeeded in endeavours to stifle in him the voice of nature, have corrupted his understanding and his morals, and driven him imperceptibly to act a detestable part towards his father. After La Harpe had quitted him, after a separate court was established for him,

* Many have supposed that she entertained a design of making Potemkin king of Taurica, in order to have his support in disinheriting Paul, and proclaiming Alexander tzarevitch.

and

and ſome perſons of merit removed; he was the worſt attended and leaſt occupied of princes. His days were ſpent alone with his wife, or with his valets, or in the ſociety of his grandmother. He lived more effeminate and obſcure than the heir of a ſultan in the haram of a ſeraglio. This kind of life muſt at length have ſtifled all his excellent qualities. Had he been willing, or had Catharine even been able to ſpeak but a few words before ſhe died, Paul probably would never have reigned. Who would have declared for him? and to what rights could he have appealed*? If

* I am aware that Paul was proclaimed tzarevitch, or heir to the throne. Since his acceſſion, he has attempted to remove the confuſion that prevails in the ſucceſſion of the tzars, by an act which he promulgated at his coronation, and which he had framed in concert with his wife, in the form of a will, ſo early as the year 1788; conſequently when he was only grand-duke, and of courſe could diſpoſe of nothing. The year 1788 was the time when Potemkin was in the zenith

If the Ruſſians have no fixed rights, ſtill leſs have their ſovereigns. Since Peter I. who

zenith of his power. It appears that Paul, at that juncture, apprehended ſome unhappy cataſtrophe, ſince he made theſe arrangements: in fact, it was then in agitation to diſinherit him, and divide the empire between his eldeſt ſon and Potemkin.

In this act, Paul, though merely grand-duke, arrogates to himſelf the ſame right as Peter I.—that of nominating his ſucceſſor. Accordingly he bequeaths the empire to his eldeſt ſon, and his male deſcendants; failing theſe alſo, his female deſcendants were to ſucceed in an order which Paul laid down, endeavouring to prevent and regulate all the inconveniences that could occur to the end of time.

That the ſon ſhould be heir to his father is a natural right, but there can be no right by which an emperor ſhall nominate his ſucceſſor, and bequeath an empire like an eſtate. Let us ſuppoſe, however, that a Ruſſian ſovereign is actually poſſeſſed of this power, how can one take it from the reſt, or reſtrict it, by nominating the ſucceſſor of his ſucceſſor? Is not Alexander or Conſtantine to enjoy the ſame power as Paul? Is it not treaſonable to imagine the contrary? Such are the inconveniences in which they involve themſelves who build upon errors and prejudices, and contemn the laws of nature and nations. The laws which iſſue from their brains having no ſupport but the power that promulgates them, periſh with it. A hundred years

who arrogated to himſelf the power of nominating his ſucceſſor, the throne of the tzars has been occupied by ſcarcely any other than uſurpers, who have overturned each other with more barbarity and confuſion than the ſucceſſors of Ottoman. Catharine I. became empreſs, becauſe Mentchikof had the boldneſs to proclaim her*; Peter II. reigned by virtue of a will; Anne was elected by a council, the ſenate, and the army; Ivan was made emperor by an ukaſe; Elizabeth ſaid, in her manifeſto, that ſhe aſcended the throne of her father becauſe the people willed it, and the guards revolted; and on theſe grounds ſhe con-

years hence, a Ruſſian emperor will not tumble over the old papers of Paul, to know how he ſhall act; for before that time, perhaps, events may take place which will inſpire into the minds of the Ruſſians ideas more clear and ſimple.

* It was pleaſantly ſaid on that occaſion, that a journeyman paſtry-cook proclaimed a ſervant-maid empreſs of all the Ruſſias.

demned

demned a prince in the cradle to a perpetual priſon; and his relations, as innocent as himſelf, experienced the ſame fate. Peter III. reigned by favor of Elizabeth; and when he was dethroned, Catharine II. aſcending the throne of Ruſſia, declared, that heaven itſelf had called her to it. A ſon ſupplanting his father would not, after ſuch a ſeries, have excited any remarkable diſguſt, but the ſudden death of Catharine happily prevented that cataſtrophe. The dreadful ſhriek ſhe gave as ſhe expired, was the voice that proclaimed Paul emperor of all the Ruſſias. His wife was the firſt who fell at his feet, and paid him homage with all her children: he raiſed her up, embraced her and them, giving them aſſurance of his imperial and paternal kindneſs. The court, the chief officers of the different departments and of the army, all who were on the ſpot, came then to proſtrate themſelves, and take the oath

to

to him, each according to his rank and ſeniority. A detachment of guards conducted him into the palace, and the officers and ſoldiers arriving in haſte from Pavlofsky and Gatſhina, ſwore fealty to him; the heads of the different colleges haſtened to take the ſame oath. The emperor repaired himſelf to the ſenate to receive it; and this memorable night paſſed without diſturbance or confuſion.

The next day, Paul was proclaimed emperor everywhere, and his ſon Alexander *tzarevitch*, or heir preſumptive to the throne. Thus, after five-and-thirty years ſpent amid reſtraint, denials, offences, and contempt, the ſon of Catharine, at the age of forty-three, found himſelf at length maſter of himſelf, and of all the Ruſſias. The firſt ſteps which he took ſeemed to contradict the reports of his ſtern and capricious diſpoſition. He had long ſuffered by the abuſes and

and diſorders of the court: bred in the ſchool of misfortune, the crucible in which great minds are refined, and little ones evaporate; a diſtant ſpectator of affairs, ſcrutinizing the plans and conduct of his mother, he had had thirty years leiſure to regulate his own. Accordingly it appeared that he had in his pocket a multitude of regulations ready drawn up, which he had nothing to do but to unfold, and put in execution with aſtoniſhing rapidity*.

Far from imitating the conduct which his mother had held with reſpect to him, he immediately called his ſons about him, entruſted each with the command of one of the regiments of guards, and made the elder military governor of Peterſburg,

* His intimates had long been in poſſeſſion of his military regulations, which he put in execution at Gatſhina and Pavlofsky, and which in a moment became thoſe of all the Ruſſian armies.

burg, an important poſt, which chained the young prince to his father's ſide. His firſt behaviour towards the empreſs ſurpriſed and delighted every one. He ſuddenly changed his conduct towards her, aſſigned her a conſiderable revenue, increaſed thoſe of his children in proportion, and loaded his family with careſſes and kindneſſes.

His conduct towards the favorite likewiſe had every feature of generoſity. He appeared moved with his affliction; and, acknowledging the attachment he ſhewed to his mother, continued him in his offices in flattering terms; ſaying, when he delivered to him the cane of command, which is borne by the general *aide-de-camp* upon duty: "Continue to execute thoſe functions about "the corpſe of my mother: I hope "you will ſerve me as faithfully as you "have ſerved her."

The

The miniſters, and the heads of the different departments, were likewiſe confirmed in their employ in condeſcending terms; and the moſt powerful were even promoted, and loaded with additional favors.

The firſt ukaſe he iſſued announced pacific diſpoſitions, and muſt particularly have attached the nobility to him. A levy of recruits recently ordered by Catharine, which would have taken one peaſant in every hundred, was ſuſpended and annulled by this ukaſe. This levy, however, was a few months after renewed.

Every hour, every moment announced ſome wiſe change, ſome juſt puniſhment, or ſome merited favor. The court and city were ſurpriſed. People began to imagine that his character had been miſtaken, and that his long and melancholy

choly pupillage had not entirely depraved it. All the world ſaw itſelf happily deceived in its expectations, and the conduct of the grand-duke was forgotten in that of the emperor; but which was too ſoon brought again into remembrance. Let us beſtow a few minutes more on the hopes of happineſs which he promiſed his empire.

The firſt two political ſteps taken by Paul inſpired confidence, gained the nobility, and ſuſpended two horrible ſcourges which Catharine, at her death, ſeemed to have bequeathed to Pruſſia—war, and a ſtate bankruptcy. She had at length reſolved to act directly againſt France, by ſuccouring the emperor of Germany, and attacking Pruſſia*. In conſequence,

* This ſcheme of Catharine is incontrovertible: ſhe reſolved to drive the king of Pruſſia back to the borders of the Rhine with her cannon. To make him feel the abſolute neceſſity of returning to the coalition, ſhe fomented revolts in Pruſſia, at Dantzic, and in Sileſia.

ſhe

ſhe had iſſued orders for raiſing near a hundred thouſand recruits. The coffers of the ſtate being emptied, and aſſignats multiplied to ſuch a point, that they were threatened with the ſame fate as thoſe of France*; ſhe thought proper to double her current coin, by giving every piece of money twice its former value. Paul quaſhed theſe two diſaſtrous meaſures, which had already began to be carried into execution. At the ſame time he broke off the treaty of ſubſidy with England which was on the carpet; not that it was his intention, as had been publiſhed abroad, to acknowledge the French republic, but becauſe his imperial pride was, not without reaſon, above entering into the pay of England, like a petty ſtate†.

Koſciuſzko

* At this juncture they fell ſixty per cent.

† It is ſaid, however, that he receives at preſent large ſubſidies from England, but it is in Engliſh goods; and Paul has eſtabliſhed warehouſes, where they are

ſold

Kofciufzko, who has been called the laft of the Poles, as Philopœmen was the laft of the Greeks, was made prifoner of war, as all the world knows, when defending his country againft the attacks of foreigners. He was, however, detained as a ftate criminal, though he was always better treated * than Ignatius

fold on his account. This trade of the crown is not new: feveral of the Siberian tribes pay their taxes in kind; and, during the reign of Elizabeth, the trade with China was carried on by government. It even fometimes happened, that for want of money the officers of the army were paid in goods from the warehoufes of the crown; as tea, cloth, and furs. Thefe meafures of Paul will prove infallible means of quickly conveying to England the little current coin left in his country, and he will foon be obliged to pay his whole army likewife in Englifh hardware.

* He was in the houfe of the late count Anhalt. For a guard he had a major, who fat at table with him. People were permitted to fee him; he had feveral rooms at his command, and he employed himfelf in reading, drawing, and turning. The colonel, to whom he was conducted as prifoner by the chaffeurs, who found him wounded in a marfh, is a young man, a friend of mine,

tius Pototſki, and his other companions in misfortune, who were more rigorouſly confined in the fortreſs, and at Schluſſelburg. Paul gave liberty to them all, and was generous enough to go himſelf to deliver Koſciuſzko from confinement. It was intereſting to ſee this brave man, ſtill ſick of his wounds and grief, carried to the palace, where he was introduced to the emperor and empreſs,

mine, equally brave and humane. He kept a pocket-book of Koſciuſzko's, which we looked over together. We found in it ſeveral notes, in French and Italian, taken during a tour in Italy, philoſophical obſervations, extracts from authors, effuſions in French verſe, and rough draughts of various ſmall compoſitions. Every thing ſhowed that the pocket book had belonged to a man of merit, knowledge, taſte, and feeling. There were in it likewiſe ſeveral letters ſealed, and addreſſed to ladies at Warſaw, in French and Poliſh, with ſketches of ſome of the manifeſtoes he publiſhed, all in his own hand-writing. My friend kept this pocket-book as a relic of a celebrated man whom he had admired, while forced to fight againſt him. When he was ſet at liberty, I ſuggeſted to my friend the idea of returning theſe papers to their owner, and I believe he did ſo.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL TANJORE

to teſtify his gratitude to them. He is a little thin perſon, pale and emaciated: his head was ſtill ſurrounded with bandages, and his forehead could not be ſeen: but his mien, his eyes, ſtill brought to remembrance what he dared attempt with ſuch feeble means. He refuſed the peaſants that Paul would have given him in Ruſſia, but accepted a ſum of money to go and live independent in another country*.

This circumſtance made a great and favorable impreſſion on the public. Unqueſtionably it did honor to Paul; but, to appreciate his conduct on this occaſion, it muſt be remembered, that

* America was the place he choſe for his reſidence. When he was in England, on his way thither, a model of him was taken by Miſs C. Andras, which is ſaid to be a ſtriking likeneſs, and from which an elegant whole length engraving has been made by Sharpe.—*Tr.*

Koſci-

Kosciuszko had not personally offended him, though he had the empress Catharine. Perhaps, therefore, Kosciuszko is indebted for his liberty to Paul's affectation of acting contrary to his mother in every respect.

The funeral honors to be paid to the empress, were another happy circumstance to engage the mind of Paul; thus suspending or interrupting the torrent of new regulations; but, what was not expected of him, he considered it as a filial duty to remove the ashes of his unfortunate father. The name of Peter III. which no one had dared to pronounce for five-and-thirty years, appeared on a sudden at the head of the ceremonial of mourning and interment; and the services to be performed, and funeral honors paid to Peter and Catharine, were prescribed at the same time. On reading the *prekase*, it might have been supposed

that the husband and wife had just departed together. Paul repaired to the convent of Alexander Nefsky, where the body of his father had been deposited. Causing the old monks to shew him the private grave, and open the coffin in his presence, he paid the sad remains that still presented themselves to his eyes, a tribute of respectful and affecting tears*. The coffin was placed on high in the middle of the church, and the same service was performed by it as by that of Catharine, which was exposed to view on a bed of state in the palace.

Paul then caused a search to be made for those officers who were attached to

* He took one of the gloves, that still covered the remains of his father, and kissed it several times with tears. O Paul! thou hadst then the heart of a son; sometimes thou hast appeared a good father! What might not have been expected from another mother, and a different education!

his

his father at the time of his unhappy catastrophe, and who had since lived in disgrace or unknown at court. Baron Ungern Sternberg, a respectable old man, who had long lived in retirement amid a small circle of friends, and who had not even a wish to be brought forward again upon the stage of the great world, was at once made general in chief, and sent for to the emperor, who ordered him to be ushered into his closet. After receiving him in the most gracious manner, he said, "Have you heard what I am "doing for my father?"—"Yes, Sire," answered the old general, "I have heard "it with astonishment."—"With asto-"nishment! why? is it not a duty I had "to fulfil? See," continued he, turning to a picture of Peter III. which was already placed in the closet*, "I will "have

* All the pictures of Peter III. had been proscribed, both in the imperial palaces and private houses. How Paul contrived to conceal this I cannot tell. Happy,

" have him to witneſs my gratitude to-
" wards his faithful friend." Saying theſe words, he embraced general Ungern, and inveſted him with the riband of St. Alexander. The worthy old man, although he was little dazzled with this vanity, could not reſiſt ſo affecting a ſcene, and retired with his eyes ſwimming in tears.

Paul then directed him to do duty by his father's body, enjoining him to provide for the ceremony the ſame uniform as he had worn when *aide-de-camp* to Peter III. Ungern was lucky enough to find ſuch a one in the poſſeſſion of an old acquaintance. Paul would ſee this relic; he kept it himſelf, and it made the fortune of him who had ſo well preſerved it.

Happy, at this period, he who could find one of theſe portraits in a lumber-room, to which it had been baniſhed: it preſently became the chief ornament of his houſe. The painters of Peterſburg could not ſupply the demand for copies.

it*. Several other officers, and among them the only one who had attempted to make

* General Ungern Sternberg is a Livonian, and was formerly the friend and comrade of general Melissino. The writer of these Memoirs has been very intimate with him, which he mentions here, to give more weight to what follows. Ungern was one of those German officers who stood highest in Peter's esteem, and was his *aide-de-camp*. It was he whom he chose to accompany him in a secret visit which he paid to the unfortunate Ivan at Schlusselburg, where he had been confined by Elizabeth, who dethroned him. They found this wretched young man in a dungeon, the window of which admitted but a faint gleam of day, the light being intercepted by piles of wood heaped up in the court. He was in a very dirty white jacket, with a pair of old shoes on his feet. His hair was very light, and cut short like that of a Russian slave. He was tolerably well made, and his complexion had a paleness which shewed that the sun had never shone on his face. He was then upwards of twenty, and had been confined ever since he was fourteen months old; but he had received some impressions and ideas which he still retained. Peter III, affected at his condition, put several questions to him; among the rest, "Who are you?"—"I am the emperor."—"Who put you into prison, then?"—"Vile, wicked "people."—"Would you like to be emperor again?" —"To

make any resistance in favor of Peter III. at the revolution in 1762, were found out in

—"To be sure: why not? I should then have fine "clothes, and servants to wait upon me."—"But what "would you do if you were emperor?"—"I would "cut off the heads of all those who have wronged "me." Peter III. having then asked whence he learned what he told him; he answered, that he had it from the Virgin and the angels, and began to enter into long stories of these pretended visions. Though alone, and confined from his infancy, he did not appear terrified at the sight of the emperor and his officers. He examined his dress and weapons with much curiosity and pleasure, as a bold child would have done. The emperor asked him again what he wished for, and he answered in his vulgar Russian dialect, "To have "more air." Ungern was left some time at Schlusselberg to gain his confidence, and find out whether his apparent imbecility were only assumed. He was soon convinced, however, that it was the natural consequence of his mode of life. He gave him, from the emperor, a silk morning gown. Ivan put it on with transports of joy, running about the room, and admiring himself as a savage would have done who had never been dressed before. As all his wishes centred in the requisition of more air, Peter III. sent the plan of a little circular palace, in the centre of which was to be a garden, with orders to have it built for Ivan in the court of the fortress. It was cruel, that this act of humanity

in their retirement, and recalled to court, to be loaded with favors.

Theſe particulars are affecting, and do honor to the heart of Paul; but it appears from the anſwer of Ungern, that they aſtoniſhed every one. Some attribute them as much to Paul's oppoſition to his mother as to his love for his father; and ſeveral aſcribe this part of his conduct to a politic deſign of thus proclaiming him for his father, who would not, when alive, acknowledge him for his ſon. The parade and oſtentation with which he cauſed the ſad remains of Peter to be diſinterred, and then held up to the admiration of the public, were particularly blamed. The coffin that con-

manity towards an innocent man ſhould have ſerved as a pretext againſt the unfortunate Peter. He was charged with having intended to build a priſon for his wife and ſon, and this was made a pretext for his own aſſaſſination.

tained

tained them was crowned*, and removed in great pomp to the palace, to be exhibited there, in a temple conſtructed for the purpoſe, by the ſide of the corpſe of Catharine, with which it was afterwards to be conveyed to the citadel. Then alone did the huſband and wife reſt together in peace. People came with great reſpect to kiſs the coffin of the one, and the cold and livid hand of the other; they made a genuflexion, and were obliged to deſcend the ſtairs backwards. The empreſs, who had been badly embalmed, ſoon appeared quite disfigured: her hands, eyes, and lower part of her face, were black, blue, and yellow. Thoſe who had ſeen her only in public, could not know her again; and all the pomp with which ſhe was ſtill ſurrounded, all the

* Peter III. had never been crowned, and this was the reaſon aſſigned for not burying him in the citadel with the other Ruſſian emperors.

riches

riches that covered her corpſe, ſerved only to augment the horror it inſpired.

If, by reſtoring the honors of his father, Paul might be thought by any to throw diſgrace on the memory of his mother, by bringing to mind the ſcenes which five-and-thirty years ſilence had nearly conſigned to oblivion; yet the vengeance he took on ſome of the aſſaſſins of Peter III. poſſeſſed a degree of ſublimity which was approved by all. The celebrated Alexius Orlof, the conqueror of Tcheſme, once ſo powerful, remarkable for his gigantic ſtature and antique dreſs, and whoſe age and military honors would have entitled him to reſpect, if ſuch a man could be reſpected, was obliged to follow the ſad remains of Peter. Every eye was turned upon him, and the performance of this juſt, but cruel taſk, muſt have awakened in him that remorſe which his long proſperity had

had no doubt lulled aſleep. As to prince Baratinſky, he durſt not appear before Paul, who could never bear his ſight, but had fled from Peterſburg. Paſſick, who owed his fortune ſolely to the ſame crime, which his very countenance ſeemed to call to mind, was fortunately abſent from court, and ſurvived the funeral but a few days.

This was the conduct of Paul in the firſt days of his reign; and I have collected the whole of it together, leſt theſe inſtances of reaſon, juſtice, and feeling, ſhould be loſt and forgotten in the heap of unaccountable actions with which they were afterwards obſcured, and which I ſhall now proceed to relate.

The guards, that dangerous body of men, who had overturned the throne of the father, and who had long conſidered the acceſſion of the ſon as the term of their

their military exiſtence, were rendered incapable of injuring him by a bold and vigorous ſtep, and treated without the leaſt management from the firſt day. Paul incorporated in the different regiments of guards his battalions that arrived from Gatſhina*, the officers of which he diſtributed among the various companies, promoting them at the ſame time two or three ſteps; ſo that ſimple lieutenants or captains in the army found themſelves at once captains in the guards, a place ſo important, and hitherto ſo honored, and which gives the rank of colonel, or even of brigadier. Some

* Paul expected theſe battalions with evident impatience and anxiety. They marched all night, and arrived in the morning. Ratikof, a ſubaltern, who had no other merit than the good fortune of announcing to him their wiſhed-for arrival, was inſtantly created a knight of St. Anne, and made *aide-de-camp* to the grand-duke. It was not till Paul ſaw himſelf ſurrounded with his little army, that he began to act as he had done at Gatſhina.

of

of thoſe ancient captains, of the firſt families in the kingdom, found themſelves under the command of officers of no birth, who but a few years before had left their companies as ſerjeants or corporals, to enter into the battalions of the grand-duke. This bold and haſty change, which at any other time would have been fatal to its author, had only the effect of inducing a few hundreds of officers, ſubalterns and others, to retire. Moſt of theſe were ſuch as had ſufficient to live upon beſide their commiſſions, or could neither digeſt the putting others over their heads, nor ſupport the haraſſing diſcipline which the intruders were about to eſtabliſh *. Many of

* Of theſe obtruded officers, no one made his fortune ſo rapidly as Araktſcheief. Seven years before, the grand-duke, wiſhing to have a company of artillery at Pavloſsky, aſked general Meliſſino for an officer capable of forming one. Araktſcheief, who had been brought up in the corps of cadets, and who had gotten

of theſe young officers, however, felt no other affront than that of being obliged

to

gotten himſelf noticed by the progreſs he made, and particularly for the ardour and paſſionate zeal he diſplayed for the minutiæ of diſcipline, was named. In ſpite of his indefatigable attentions, ſeverity, and exactneſs in the ſervice, it was ſome time before he could eſtabliſh himſelf thoroughly in the good opinion of Paul. Several pretty fireworks, which he compoſed with the aſſiſtance of his old maſter for the entertainment at Pavlofsky, but, above all, the rage for exerciſing with which he burned, and which induced him to haraſs the ſoldiers day and night, at length gained him the favor of the grand-duke. At his acceſſion to the throne, Araktſcheief was created a major in the guards, with the rank of general, and appointed military governor of Peterſburg. He received the military order of St. Anne, with ſome thouſands of peaſants, and became the emperor's right-hand. Araktſcheief, with whom major M** has ſerved in the corps of cadets, where he was ſerjeant, was truly commendable for the talents, acquirements, and zeal which he diſplayed at that time: but he poſſeſſes a diſguſting degree of brutality, which he exerciſed even towards the cadets. Never was pindaric poet more imperiouſly tormented by his muſe, than this man is poſſeſſed by his military demon. His fury and his cane have already coſt more than one unfortunate ſoldier his life, even under the eye of Paul. He has revived a barbarity, which was no longer known in the Ruſſian ſervice: he abuſes and ſtrikes the

to quit their brilliant uniforms, and to alter their dreſs according to that of thoſe

very officers when exerciſing. However, at the period of his favor, that he might have the appearance of being grateful, he recommended general Meliſſino, his former friend, with whom he was at variance. He has juſt been diſgraced, but ſince recalled, and created a baron. It was he who reviewed the troops ſent into Germany.

The hiſtory of another of theſe officers deſerves to be mentioned for its ſingularity. It will prove how a man ſometimes makes his way in the world.

One of the friends of major M**, taking a walk on the quay, met with a youth of ſixteen, who appeared to have lately landed, and who walked in deſpair along the water-ſide, as if meditating to throw himſelf in. He went up, and ſpoke to him. The young ſtranger ſaid, that he was a Frenchman by deſcent, but born in Ruſſia; that the grand-duke had been his god-father; that his father had ſent him in his infancy to France, to be educated in a ſeminary there, from which he had eloped, to return to Ruſſia, where he could learn no news of his father; that he was without money, without acquaintances, and did not know what to do, unleſs he made away with himſelf. The major's friend endeavoured to conſole him, took him to his own houſe, and made ſome inquiries. He learned that his father, baron Biliſtein, had in fact been

thoſe battalions which had ſo long excited their ridicule.

Paul,

been preceptor to the grand-duke, but that he had ſince married in Moldavia, where he died. Major M** and his friends exerted themſelves to get the young man admitted into the guards as a ſubaltern officer. In the Swediſh war, he went with his regiment, and was made priſoner at the defeat of the Ruſſian galleys. A year after he came back in a more deplorable condition than ever; and, to add to his misfortunes, the major's friend and his other patrons being no longer at Peterſburg, he had no reſource but major M**, to whom he came every day to relate his misfortunes. One morning he found him reading the life of Jamerai-Duval, and his correſpondence with Miſs Sacalof, afterwards the wife of admiral Ribas. M** knew that this lady was a friend of Miſs Nelidof, the miſtreſs of the grand-duke, which ſuggeſted to him the following ſtep. He dictated to Biliſtein a letter to Madame Ribas, in which he told her, that the accidentally reading one of her charming letters to Duval had ſuſpended his deſpair, becauſe he conceived that a lady, who could paint the ſentiments of benevolence and humanity ſo well, muſt poſſeſs them in her heart: in conſequence, he laid before her his ſad ſituation, and ſolicited her influence to be recommended to the grand-duke. Madame Ribas ſent for him, and recommended him to Miſs Nelidof, who preſented him to the grand-duke. A

few

Paul, alarmed and enraged at this general desertion, went to the barracks, flattered the soldiers, appeased the officers, and endeavoured to retain them, by excluding from all employ, civil and military, those who should retire in future, and who besides were no longer to wear their uniform. He afterwards issued an order, that every officer or subaltern who had resigned, or should give in his resignation, should quit the capital within four-and-twenty hours, and return to his own home. It did not enter into the head of the person who drew up the ukase, that it contained an absurdity; for several of the officers were natives of

few hundred rubles were given him to equip himself, and through the means of count Soltikof he obtained a lieutenant's commission in the battalions at Pavlofsky. From that time he lived less wretched, and always appeared extremely grateful. At the accession of the grand-duke he was made a lieutenant-colonel in the guards.

Peter-

Peterſburg, and had families reſiding in the city. Accordingly ſome of them retired to their homes without quitting the capital, not obeying the firſt part of the order, leſt they ſhould be found guilty of diſobedience to the ſecond. Arkarof, who was to ſee it put in force, having informed the emperor of this contradiction, he directed that the injunction to quit Peterſburg ſhould alone be obeyed. A number of young men were conſequently taken out of their houſes as criminals, put out of the city, with orders not to re-enter it, and left in the road without ſhelter, and without any furred garments, in very ſevere weather. They who belonged to very remote provinces, for the moſt part wanting money to carry them thither, wandered about the neighbourhood of Peterſburg, where ſeveral periſhed with cold and want.

These meaſures were extended to all the officers of the army; and thoſe on the ſtaff as generals were equally obliged to join their regiments, or reſign, becauſe theſe ſtaffs were aboliſhed. By this impolitic ſtep he pretended to commence a reform, and gain the army. But what ſoon ſhewed that Paul, in becoming emperor, by no means renounced the military trifles which had alone occupied his time as grand-duke, was his devoting all his attention, from the morning of his aſcending the throne, to the frivolous changes which he wiſhed to introduce into the dreſs and exerciſe of the ſoldiers. For a moment the palace had the appearance of a place taken by aſſault by foreign troops; thoſe who began to mount guard there differing ſo much in dreſs and ſtile from thoſe who had been ſeen there the day before. He went down into the court, where he was manœuvring his ſoldiers

three

three or four hours, to teach them to mount guard after his faſhion, and eſtabliſh his *wacht parade* (guard-parade), which became the moſt important inſtitution and central point of his government. Every day ſince he has dedicated the ſame time to it, however cold it might be. There, in a plain deep green uniform, great boots, and a large hat, he ſpends his mornings in exerciſing his guards: there he gives his orders, receives reports, publiſhes his favors, rewards, and puniſhments; and there every officer muſt be preſented to him, ſurrounded by his ſons and *aides-de-camp*, ſtamping his heels on the pavement to keep himſelf warm, his bald head bare, his noſe cocked up, one hand behind his back, and with the other raiſing and falling his cane in due time, and crying, *raz*, *dva*; *raz*, *dva*; one, two; one, two; he prides himſelf in braving a cold of fifteen or twenty degrees of Reaumur

without

without furs. After this, none of the officers dared any longer appear in pelisses; and the old generals, tormented with coughs, gout, and rheumatism, were obliged to form a circle round Paul, dressed like himself*.

After the first impressions which his accession caused in the heart of Paul, punishments and disgraces succeeded with the same rapidity and profusion with

* A Hogarth, who should see the emperor and his younger son busy about a poor recruit, turning him to the right and to the left, marching him forward and backward, raising up his chin, tightening his belt, and placing his head properly, with every now and then a blow, would have a fine subject for a caricature. An emigrant of the name of Lami conceived the humorous idea of dedicating to Paul a bad translation he made of the explanation of Hogarth's prints. I know not whether he did it out of simplicity, or as a stroke of satire; but the name of Paul is very happily placed at the head of that work, which wanted only the ridicule of such a dedication to make it complete. Paul, however, suspected no joke in it, for he sent abbe Lami a present of a snuff-box.

which

which he had laviſhed his favors. Several experienced the two extremes in a few days. It is true, that moſt of theſe puniſhments at firſt appeared juſt: but then it muſt be allowed, that Paul could ſcarcely ſtrike any but the guilty, ſo corrupt had been all who were about the throne.

Notwithſtanding the aſſurances he had given Zubof, one of the firſt orders that followed was, to ſeal up his office and that of Markof, and to turn their officers and ſecretaries out of court with diſgrace. One Terſky, maſter of requeſts, and reporter to the ſenate, who publicly ſold juſtice to the higheſt bidder, was at firſt gratified with an order of knighthood, and obtained ſome lands, which he ſaid the late empreſs had promiſed him a few days before her deceaſe; next morning he was diſmiſſed from his offices. This reſpect of Paul

to

to the pretended will of his mother, and his care to enrich a raſcal before diſcarding him, were ſtrangely admired. Surely he ought rather to have brought to trial this deſpoiler of the widow and orphan, and made him an example, to ſatisfy public juſtice!

Samoïlof, the attorney-general, whom likewiſe he had honorably confirmed in his office, with a preſent of four thouſand peaſants, amounting in value to more than twenty thouſand rubles (2000*l.*) a year, was diſplaced a few days after, put under arreſt, and his ſecretary was ſent to the fortreſs. Thus was everything reformed, except Beſborodko, Nicholas Soltikof, and Arkarof*.

This wavering and uncertain conduct, which characteriſed the firſt ſteps of

* See the next chapter.

Paul,

Paul, clearly proves that his favors were the effects of policy; and the difgraces that followed them were to be afcribed to paffion rather than to juftice. But what confounded all who had admired him, was to fee him, at the moment when he entered fuch an intricate labyrinth of bufinefs and abufes, the importance of which to the ftate fhould have occupied him at leaft fome days, applying the very morning of his acceffion with the fame eagernefs to the moft trifling details of military fervice. The fhape of a hat, the color of a feather, the altitude of a grenadier's cap, boots, fpatterdafhes, cockades, queues, and fword-belts, became the affairs of ftate that abforbed his aftonifhing activity. He was furrounded by patterns of accoutrements and uniforms of all kinds. The greateft proof of zeal and merit any one could give him during the firft days of his reign, was to appear before him

him in the new uniform he had introduced. An officer, who could give his tailor a hundred rubles to have a drefs of the new fafhion made in a few hours, and appear in it the next morning in the *wacht-parade*, was almoft certain of obtaining fome poft, or at leaft a crofs. Several had no other merit, and employed no other means to gain the good graces of their new emperor*.

Another whim, which caufed no little furprife, was the imperial prohibition of wearing round hats, or rather the fudden order of taking them away, or tearing them to pieces on the heads of thofe

* General Meyendorf being mentioned to him as a good officer of horfe, he difpatched a courier to him; and Meyendorf, in his eagernefs to obey the command, prefented himfelf at the parade in his ancient uniform. Paul, enraged, uttered fome fevere reproaches to thofe who had recommended fuch a man, called him one of *Potemkin's foldiers*, and banifhed him to his eftate.

who appeared in them. This occafioned fome difgraceful fcenes in the ftreets, and particularly near the palace. The coffacks and foldiers of the police fell on the paffengers to uncover their heads, and beat thofe who, not knowing the reafon, attempted to defend themfelves. An Englifh merchant, going through the ftreet in a fledge, was thus ftopped, and his hat fnatched off. Suppofing it to be a robbery, he leaped out of his fledge, knocked down the foldier, and called the guard. Inftead of the guard, arrived an officer, who overpowered, and bound him; but as they were carrying him before the police, he was fortunate enough to meet the coach of the Englifh minifter, who was going to court, and claimed his protection*. Sir

* Another Englifhman was met by an officer of the police, who took from him his round hat. The Englifhman, folding his arms, and furveying him from head to foot, faid with a look of compaffion, "Ah, "friend! how I pity thee for being a Ruffian!"

Charles

Charles Whitworth made his complaint to the emperor; who, conjecturing that a round hat might be the national drefs of the Englifh, as it is of the Swedes *, faid, that his order had been mifconceived, and he would explain himfelf more fully to Arkarof. The next day it was publifhed in the ftreets and houfes, that ftrangers, who were not in the emperor's fervice, or naturalized, were not comprifed in the prohibition. Round hats were now no longer pulled off: but they who were met with this unlucky head-drefs were conducted to the police to afcertain their country. If they were found to be Ruffians, they were fent for foldiers; and woe to a

* It is likewife the national hat of the Ruffians, a little difference in the crown excepted, which it was well to be apprifed of, as it prevented the wearer from infult. The hatters' fhops being foon emptied of cocked hats, they who had neither time nor means to procure one, cocked up their little round hats with pins, that they might walk the ftreets with fafety.

French-

Frenchman, who had been met with in this drefs, for he would have been condemned as a jacobin*. It was reported to Paul, that the *chargé d'affaires* of the king of Sardinia, indulging himfelf in raillery at this fingular profcription of round hats, faid, that fuch trifles had often been on the point of occafioning feditions in Italy. The *chargé d'affaires* received orders, through Arkarof, to quit the city in twenty-four hours. Thanks to the diftance and fituation of the king of Sardinia, he could not demand an explanation of fuch an infult, otherwife round hats might have become the motive of a war between two monarchs †.

A regu-

* Perhaps the reader may fuppofe that thefe round hats were confidered as fome party fign. By no means: it was a fingular averfion which Paul had for them; and he had declared war againft them at Pavlofsky four years before.

† It was fortunate that it did not happen to the Swedifh or Pruffian ambaffador. The latter, however, fell

A regulation equally incomprehenſible was the ſudden prohibition of harneſſing horſes after the Ruſſian mode. A fortnight was allowed for procuring harneſs in the German faſhion; after the expiration of which, the police was enjoined to cut the traces of every carriage, the horſes of which were harneſſed in the ancient manner. Almoſt as ſoon as it was made public, ſeveral perſons dared not venture abroad, ſtill leſs appear in their carriages near the palace, for fear of being inſulted. The ſadlers, availing themſelves of the occaſion, aſked as far as three hundred rubles (30*l.*) for a plain

fell into diſgrace with Paul for a motive equally noble. He gives out that the hat, the tail, the bag, the ſpatterdaſhes, and the ſword behind the back, are in the Pruſſian mode. M. van Tauenziehn appeared to proteſt againſt the fidelity of the tranſlation, by coming to court in a more modern and more elegant uniform. This was the crime for which Paul demanded his recal.

 har-

harneſs for a pair of horſes. To dreſs the *iſchvoſchtſchiki*, or Ruſſian coachmen, in the German faſhion, was attended with another inconvenience. Moſt of them would neither part with their long beards, their *kaftans*, nor their round hats; ſtill leſs would they tie a falſe tail to their ſhort hair, which produced the moſt ridiculous ſcenes and figures in the world. At length the emperor had the vexation to be obliged to change his rigorous order into a ſimple invitation to his ſubjects gradually to adopt the German faſhion of dreſs, if they wiſhed to merit his favor.

Another reform with reſpect to carriages: the great number of ſplendid equipages that ſwarmed in the ſtreets of Peterſburg, diſappeared in an inſtant. The officers, even the generals, came to the parade on foot, or in little ſledges,

which

which alſo was not without its dangers*.

It was anciently a point of etiquette for every perſon who met a Ruſſian autocrate, his wife, or ſon, to ſtop his horſe or coach, alight, and proſtrate himſelf in the ſnow, or in the mud †. This barbarous homage, difficult to be paid in a large city, where carriages paſs in great numbers, and always on the gallop, had been completely aboliſhed under the reign of the poliſhed Catharine. One of the firſt cares of Paul was to re-eſtabliſh it in

* An officer, walking the ſtreets in a large peliſſe, had given his ſervant his ſword, which incommoded him, intending to put it on again, and to take off his peliſſe, when he got near the palace. Unfortunately, before this took place, the emperor met him, and in conſequence he was reduced to the ranks, and his ſervant made an officer in his place.

† Peter I. ordered thoſe who proſtrated themſelves before him in this manner to be caned, and even caned them himſelf.

all

all its rigour. A general officer, who paſſed on without his coachman's obſerving the emperor riding by on horſeback, was ſtopped, and immediately put under arreſt*. The ſame unpleaſant circumſtance occurred to ſeveral others, ſo that nothing was ſo much dreaded, either on foot or in a carriage, as the meeting of the emperor. Inſtances have even happened where the fault and its puniſhment have been attended with conſequences ſo ſerious, as muſt induce a benevolent monarch to aboliſh ſo troubleſome an etiquette.

The ceremony eſtabliſhed within the palace became equally ſtrict, and equally

* When his ſword was returned him, he refuſed to take it, ſaying, that it was a gold-hilted ſword received from the empreſs, with the privilege of its never being taken from him. Paul ſent for him, returned the ſword to him himſelf, and ſaid, that he had reſolved to make an example, and had no particular ill-will towards him: at the ſame time he ordered him to repair immediately to the army.

dreaded. Woe betide him, who, when permitted to kiſs the hand of Paul, did not make the floor reſound by ſtriking it with his knee as loud as a ſoldier with the butt-end of his firelock. It was requiſite too, that the ſalute of the lips on his hand ſhould be heard, to certify the reality of the kiſs, as well as of the genuflexion. Prince George Gallitzin, the chamberlain, was put under arreſt on the ſpot by his Muſcovitiſh majeſty himſelf, for having made the bow and kiſſed the hand too negligently*.

Another

* Paul, when grand-duke, had a great predilection for etiquette. Being once at Montbelliard, he ſuddenly took by the arm a young officer of his ſuit, who was playing at cards, and turning him out of the room, he ſaid to thoſe who were playing with the officer, "Gen-"tlemen, that young coxcomb is not of a proper "rank to make one of your party." At the court balls, the dancers were obliged to twiſt themſelves every poſſible way, that they might not turn their backs upon him when dancing, wherever he might happen to be. Paul will allow none to turn their

backs

Another of Paul's first regulations, was a strict injunction to all tradesmen to efface from the front of their shops the French word *magazin*, and substitute the Russian word *lavka* (shop); assigning as a reason, that the emperor alone could have magazines of wood, flour, corn, &c.; while a tradesman ought not to be above his condition, but to stick to his shop.

To report all the ordinances of similar weight and importance that succeeded each other in the course of one week, I must descend into particulars too tedious*.

What

backs but his enemies. Whether they will avail themselves of the permission, if he should give them an opportunity, I will not pretend to say.

* He has since issued different ukases, prohibiting the wearing of frock coats, waistcoats without sleeves, and pantaloons. He has forbidden the academy to use the word *revolution* when speaking of the course of the stars; and has enjoined the players to employ

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What can be ſaid, what can be hoped, of a man, who, ſucceeding Catharine, could conſider the regulating ſuch things as the moſt urgent? Frequently theſe new and important regulations contradicted or fruſtrated one another, and what was ordained one day was often obliged to be modified or annulled the next. In a word, we may ſay that Paul, when he wrapped himſelf in the imperial mantle, let the grand-duke peep out; that he thought to govern a vaſt empire as he had governed his Pavlofsky; his capital, like his houſe; and thirty millions of men of all ranks and all nations, like a ſcore of lackeys.

Of all the unforeſeen changes which he introduced without any preparation, thoſe which he made in the army were

the word *permiſſion* inſtead of *liberty*, which they had been accuſtomed to put in their bills. He has forbidden the manufacturers to fabricate any tri-coloured ribands or ſtuffs whatever.

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the moſt extenſive, and the moſt impolitic. Unqueſtionably there was room for great reforms and great amendments in the military department. To improve the condition of the brave Ruſſian ſoldier; to ſettle that of the officer, which was ſtill more wretched; gradually to diminiſh the number of ſupernumeraries; to reſtore order and diſcipline, which the reign of ſo many women and ſo many favorites had deſtroyed; opened a fine field to the military genius of Paul. All he was capable of doing was to multiply irregular promotions, increaſe a ſtaff already too numerous, and alter uniforms, ranks, terms, and titles. The Ruſſian army offered a pattern to be followed, in the beauty, ſimplicity, and convenience of its dreſs, equally adapted to the climate, and to the genius of the country*. A large *charvari*, or

* Accordingly the ſoldier imagined himſelf much ſuperior to his neighbours, and not without reaſon.

Paul

or pair of pantaloons of red cloth, the ends of which terminated in boots of pliable leather, and which was faſtened by a girdle over a red and green jacket; a little helmet well adapted to a ſoldier, with the hair cut ſhort in the neck, but long enough to cover the ears, and eaſily kept in order; conſtituted the whole of the military uniform. The ſoldier was dreſſed in the twinkling of an eye, for he had but two garments; and their ſize was ſuch, as allowed him to defend himſelf from the cold by additions underneath, without infringing upon the uniformity of his external appearance. This neat and warlike equipage is now changed for the ancient dreſs of Germany,

Paul deprived him of this national pride, by compelling him ſervilely to imitate the Germans of the laſt century, whom the Ruſſians imagined they had far outſtripped. Paul has acted like a pedant, who ſhould turn a ſcholar back to his *a*, *b*, *c*, for having preſumed to learn to read too rapidly.

many,

many, which the Ruſſian ſoldier abominates: his fair locks, which he loved to waſh every morning, he muſt now bedaub with greaſe and flour; and he muſt ſpend an hour in buttoning his black ſpatterdaſhes, which he curſes for pinching his legs. He murmurs aloud: it is probable, that the falſe tail which he is forced to ſuſpend from his poll, will occaſion as many deſertions as the catogans of St. Germain*. That old original, marſhal Suvarof, when he received orders to eſtabliſh theſe novelties, with little ſticks for models for the ſoldiers tails and ſide-curls, ſaid, "Hair-powder "is not gunpowder; curls are not can-

* Before the reign of Paul, deſertion was almoſt unknown to the Ruſſians: now they deſert in parties, and repair to Pruſſia, where whole regiments are formed of them. I aſked ſome of them, why they deſerted. "Why, Sir," ſaid they, "we are forced "to be at our exerciſe from morning till night without "having anything to eat; our dreſs has been taken "from us, and we are beaten black and blue."

"nons; and tails are not bayonets." This ſarcaſm, which is not deſtitute of wit, and forms in the Ruſſian language a ſort of apophthegm in rhime, ſoon ſpread from mouth to mouth through the army, and was the true reaſon that induced Paul to recal Suvarof, and diſmiſs him from the ſervice. This old warrior was the idol of the Ruſſian ſoldiery.

It was the ſame with the changes which he made in civil affairs. His wiſh was to alter, not to improve. For anything to have ſubſiſted under the reign of his mother, was a ſufficient reaſon why it ſhould ceaſe under him. All the tribunals, all the governments of the empire, have been freſh modelled, and their ſeats have been changed. That which had been conſecrated by its name (*Ekaterinoſlaf*) to the glory of Catharine, was aboliſhed, and this public affront

front to the memory of his mother is not leſs ſo to the heart of Paul*. The reader

* There is nothing ſo trifling to which this *micro-philiſt* does not deſcend, to ſhew diſreſpect to his mother's memory. The perſons belonging to her wore rings, on which the date of her deceaſe was enamelled. The emperor expreſſed his diſſatisfaction at it; and they are obliged to wear rings with the motto of, *Paul conſoles me.*

He carried his want of filial regard ſo far, as to check, by his diſapprobation, a ſociety of opulent Ruſſians, who had united at Hamburg under the auſpices of the Ruſſian miniſter, to erect a poetical monument to the memory of Catharine. The ſituation in which major M** ſtood at that time, and particularly what he owed to two of his friends, induced him to exert his talents on the occaſion. The judges of the Lyceum at Hamburg had the courage to adjudge the ſecond prize to the piece he ſent, notwithſtanding the proſcribed ſentiments that beamed through the manner in which he ſpoke of Catharine, and his ſilence reſpecting the comforter ſhe left behind, or his alluſions to him (1). The

(1) The motto of the piece was, *Fuit illa et ingens gloria Ruſſorum*; and in it were the following verſes:

Mais j'entends retentir une voix gemiſſante;
Je vois l'Humanité plaintive et menaçante:

Barbares!

reader may judge of the confufion, injuftice, wretchednefs, and ruin, that fuch

The fecretary of the embaffy, when he announced to him the fuccefs of his piece, informed him, that they were going to fend it to the emperor, and pay his majefty the compliment of this monument, which would be magnificent, and coft vaft fums of money. At the fame time he requefted him to write an ode in honor of Paul, to be placed at the head of the pieces that had been approved. M** pofitively refufed this new tribute, which would have been a piece of meannefs in him, as he had juft been torn from his family, and unjuftly profcribed by the emperor. Not receiving

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Barbares! arrêtez : eh! pour qui cet autel?
Voyez ces combattans, ces fers, ces feux, ces armes;
Ah! mon fang et mes larmes
Vont éteindre à vos yeux cet encens criminel!

"But hark, a voice that wildly groans and fhrieks!
"Humanity bewailing, threat'ning fpeaks:
"'Barbarians, halt! for whom thofe blood-ftain'd fanes?
"'Behold yon combatants, yon arms and chains!
"'My blood, my tears, e'en now fhall quench the fire,
"'And fave each hero from the funeral pyre."

Likewife

L'aigle puiffant du nord, frappé dans fa carrière,
Se rabat fur la terre :
Il erre dans la nuit; fon aftre s'eft eteint.

"Behold the threat'ning eagle of the north,
"That foar'd exulting in refiftlefs pow'r,
"Struck in his mid career, defcends to earth,
"Wandering in night. His fun fhall rife no more."

ſuch changes of places muſt produce in Ruſſia: more than twenty thouſand gentlemen were thrown out of employ.

If this new reign has been fatal to the army and to the poor gentry, it has hitherto appeared ſtill more ſo to the unhappy peaſantry, whoſe chains it endeavours to rivet. If Paul were deſirous of taking an example from Pruſſia,

ing the medal, however, which had been adjudged to him, he ſent to the ſecretary to demand it, ſaying, he would otherwiſe make a public appeal in the newſpapers againſt ſuch an unworthy proceeding. He knew that his piece had ſpread through the court at Peterſburg, where his name had been diſcovered, though he had taken the precaution to diſguiſe it in an *anagram*; and this contributed not a little to bring Paul's anathema upon the ſociety at Hamburg. The threat of ſuch a public affront had its effect, and the medal was at length ſent, with ſome excuſes for the delay of more than a year, and a confeſſion that the emperor, having diſapproved of this monument to his mother, the illuſtrious ſociety was afraid of his indignation. Major M** himſelf communicated to me theſe particulars, as well as the letters of the ſecretary.

aſſuredly it ſhould have been that of its treatment of the Poles, whom perfidy had ſubjected to its dominion*. It would not

* Let the reader compare the ukaſe of Paul, which enjoins all his ſubjects to proſtrate themſelves at his ſight, with the order which the young king of Pruſſia has juſt given to his miniſters, on his return from Poland, where it was with indignation he found a people debaſed almoſt to as low a degree as the Ruſſians. The following is a tranſlation of ſome fragments of this memorable order, as it appears in the *Jahrbücher der Preuſſiſchen Monarchie*, "Annals of the Pruſſian "Monarchy," for January 1799:

"My dear miniſters of ſtate von Voſs and von "Schroeter: During the tour I have lately made in "the new provinces of Pruſſia, I have ſeen that the "loweſt claſs of my ſubjects in thoſe countries is in a "ſtate of civiliſation far beneath that of the other pro- "vinces. Theſe miſerable beings are degradingly diſ- "tinguiſhed by the dirtineſs of their houſes and clothes, "but ſtill more by their cringing manners, and a hu- "mility beyond bounds——In my eyes, and in thoſe "of the law, the loweſt of my ſubjects poſſeſſes the "dignity of a man. The people of theſe new pro- "vinces are ſtill ignorant of this dignity, for which they "are indebted to the Pruſſian ſceptre, becauſe the in- "ferior officers of government are ignorant of their "duty,

not be too much to ſay, that the Pruſſian government gives the Poliſh vaſſals more freedom than Koſciuſzko could have beſtowed on them, had he been victorious. The king of Pruſſia, far from imitating Catharine or Paul, who diſtributes theſe ſlaves among his courtiers, thus expoſing them to more inſupportable private tyranny, has annexed them to his domains, and they experience an infinitely milder lot than formerly*.

A report

" duty, and abuſe their authority. It is a proverbial " ſaying among them, that the Pólanders muſt be go- " verned by the whip; and I have ſeveral times heard " complaints of ſuch treatment being exerciſed towards " my ſubjects, while changing horſes," &c.

This is the manner in which a king expreſſes himſelf who, feeling as a man, revolted at the ſight of a nation of ſlaves proſtrating themſelves at his feet. He enjoins his miniſters to raiſe up this degraded nation, by inſtructing it, civiliſing it, and puniſhing abuſes of power.

* All thoſe princes who have wiſhed to raiſe the people and depreſs the great, the better to eſtabliſh the

authority

A report being ſpread, that Paul was about to reſtrict the power of maſters over their ſlaves, and give the peaſants of the lords the ſame advantages as thoſe of the crown, the people of the capital were much pleaſed with the hopes of this change. At that juncture an officer ſet off for his regiment, which lay at Oremberg. On the road he was aſked about the new emperor, and what new regulations he was making. He related what he had ſeen, and what he had heard; among the reſt, mentioning the ukaſe which was ſoon to appear in favor of the peaſants. At this news, thoſe of Tver

authority of government, have endeavoured to annex all ſeignorial rights and eſtates to their own domains. The Ruſſian autocrates take the oppoſite courſe: they diſtribute the remains of the crown among the nobility, to render them more zealous ſupporters of a government more ſevere than ever was that of the feudal ſyſtem. By this ill-judged policy they render themſelves incapable of reſtoring liberty to their ſlaves at a future period.

and

and Novgorod indulged in ſome tumultuous actions, which were conſidered as ſymptoms of rebellion. Their maſters were violently enraged with them; and the cauſe that had led them into error was diſcovered. Marſhal Repnin was immediately diſpatched at the head of ſome troops againſt the inſurgents; and the officer, who had unwittingly given riſe to this falſe hope, by retailing the news of the city on his road, was ſoon brought back in confinement. The ſenate of Peterſburg judged him deſerving of death, and condemned him to be broken, to undergo the puniſhment of the knout, and, if he ſurvived this, to labour in the mines. The emperor confirmed this ſentence. This is the firſt criminal trial that was laid before the public; and aſſuredly it juſtifies but too well thoſe remains of ſhame which have hitherto kept ſecret ſimilar outrages. Theſe circumſtances

might

might no doubt have taken place under the reign of Catharine, yet would they have been accompanied with that ſilence and myſtery in which guilt envelopes itſelf. But let us quit this ſubject for the leſs ungrateful one of the eccentricities of the emperor Paul.

The moſt prominent of theſe is that mania which, from his infancy, he diſplayed for the military dreſs and exerciſe, and which has ever ſince been increaſing. This paſſion in a prince no more indicates the general or the hero than fondneſs for dreſſing and undreſſing her doll forebodes the good mother in a girl, who paſſes her days in this amuſement. Frederic the Great, the moſt accompliſhed ſoldier of his time, is well known to have had from his infancy the moſt inſuperable repugnance to all thoſe minutiæ of a corporal to which his father

ther would have ſubjected him: this was even the firſt ſource of that diſagreement which ever ſubſiſted between the father and ſon. It was only by ſtealth that the young Frederic could indulge himſelf in ſtudying hiſtory and literature with his preceptor du Han. Frederic William conſidered every book, except the Pſalms of David and his military regulations, as uſeleſs or dangerous; and when he ſaw the young Frederic, not confining himſelf to the guard's march, but wiſhing to exchange his little drum for a harpſichord, and his fife for a German flute, he forbad him muſic. This paternal tyranny had the oppoſite effect to what his father wiſhed: it gave more energy to Frederic's repreſſed deſires. He acquired information; he became a hero: his father was never anything more than a corporal*.

* I know ſome young Ruſſians, whoſe genius the ſame cauſes have only ſerved to diſplay: thus a good bow ſprings from under the hand that bends it.

Peter III. pufhed his foldato-mania to a ridiculous point, fancying he made Frederic his model. He loved foldiers and arms, as a man loves horfes and dogs. He knew nothing but how to exercife a regiment, and never went abroad but in a captain's uniform. This Peter III. at the head of a regiment fo well drilled by himfelf, had not the courage to face a young female, who marched to meet him with a few companies of the very fame guards who were totally ignorant of the Pruffian exercife. He loft both his crown and his life, without daring to defend them. Certainly a more local, ftrong, and recent example cannot be adduced againft this mania, which feems rather to exclude courage and military talents than to be a fign of them. It is very eafy to wear a coarfe furtout buttoned over the belly, a greafy hat *, and

* Paul affects to wear a dirty hat: but where lies the merit of this? Since he will have every one do his duty,

and a ſword behind the back: a man may even ſpend the day on the parade, caning the ſoldiers and abuſing the officers: —but this would be a ſatirical caricature of a great king; it would be to repreſent him as a recruiting officer, affecting to give himſelf airs. But, ſays Molière:

Quand ſur une perſonne on prétend ſe régler,
C'eſt par les beaux côtés qu'il lui faut reſſembler:
Et ce n'eſt pas du tout la prendre pour modèle
.... que de touſſer et de cracher comme elle.

"When Admiration bids us mimic others,
"We in their virtues ſhould the ſemblance hit,
"Nor will the ſage and fool e'er paſs for brothers,
"Becauſe forſooth alike they cough or ſpit."

There is one part of this great king's conduct of much more utility, and almoſt as eaſy to imitate, ſince it requires neither talents nor genius, but merely good will, patience, and a love of juſ-

duty, why does he not make his *valets-de-chambre* do theirs, in beating and bruſhing his old beaver?

 tice;

tice; this is for a ſovereign to receive, like him, the petitions and letters of his ſubjects, but particularly to anſwer them. The perſeverance and exactneſs with which he always adhered to this reſolution, which he adopted at the beginning of his reign, cannot be too much admired. Whether he granted or refuſed, whether he found the petition reaſonable or unreaſonable, he anſwered every man who addreſſed him. I have ſeen ſeveral of thoſe anſwers, admirable for their preciſion and ſagacity; yet Frederic found time to do and write other things beſide anſwering letters. He did not riſe earlier than Paul; but he ſtaid only a quarter of an hour on the parade, and often did not go to it at all.

Nothing could be more worthy of a Ruſſian autocrate than to eſtabliſh a ſimilar communication between himſelf and his ſubjects, ſince arbitrary acts and public

lic violences are nowhere ſo frequent or ſo diſaſtrous. Hitherto, every man who had the audacity to preſent a requeſt immediately to the ſovereign, even under the reign of Catharine, was impriſoned. Paul appeared to have aboliſhed this atrocious law from the day of his acceſſion, and took ſome papers that were offered him. He even ordered a ſort of office to be conſtructed on the ſtairs of the palace, into which any one might put letters; and gave public notice, that he would read them all, make the neceſſary examinations, and then anſwer them. In conſequence, he forbad any one to diſturb him in future on the *wacht-parade*, and ordered thoſe to be arreſted who ſhould after that approach him with a paper in their hand. The box of the letter-office, however, ſoon filled; and Paul, contrary to his expectation, finding more petitions than informers, became tired of doing them juſtice, and

frightened

frightened at their number. He did not reflect that they would necessarily diminish, if he would employ more readiness and method in answering them*. Things returned to their former chaotic state; and the secretaries directed to examine these pieces are, as before, arbiters of the fate of those unfortunate persons who appealed to their master.

The finances of the empire, exhausted by the prodigalities, and still more by the waste of Catharine's reign, required a prompt remedy; and to this Paul seemed at first to turn his thoughts. Partly from hope, partly from fear, the paper money of the crown rose a little in value. It was to be supposed, that the grand-

* Paul has sometimes given orders respecting the letters he has received, but he does not answer them. I myself have drawn up a few very brief, clear, and just requests, for some oppressed persons, which remained unanswered. He now causes his refusals to the petitions he receives to be printed in the Petersburg gazettes.

duke

duke of all the Ruſſias, who for thirty years had been obliged to live on an income of a hundred thouſand rubles (10,000*l.*) per annum, would at leaſt have learned economy per force; but he was ſoon ſeen to heap wealth upon ſome, and laviſh favors upon others, with as much profuſion as his mother, and with ſtill leſs diſcernment. The ſpoils of Poland continued to add to the riches of men already too wealthy*. A man muſt be acquainted with the inexhauſtible ſources from which a Ruſſian autocrate can

* I am informed that the emperor, on his coronation, among other gratuities, diſtributed eighty-two thouſand *ſouls* among a ſcore of people; that is to ſay, in the language of metals, that he has made preſents of tracts of land inhabited and cultivated by eighty-two thouſand male ſlaves; for in Ruſſia a woman is not a ſoul yet. By theſe donations the emperor cedes the private rights which he claims over theſe wretched beings, and the lands they are obliged to cultivate, reſerving to himſelf only the ſovereignty. Now if we ſuppoſe the *ſlave-ſoul*, or peaſant, to bring the *body*, or gentleman who poſſeſſes it, only ſeven rubles clear

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can draw his means, not to be ſtruck at the immenſe gifts he beſtowed on his courtiers, and at the ſame time diſguſted at the little he has dedicated to the public, to juſtice, to merited rewards and true beneficence*.

The ſuddenneſs with which Paul ſeized the reins of government, and the terror

clear per annum, which is a very moderate computation, it follows that the emperor has given away ſo much of the domains of the crown as would produce a neat income of five hundred and ſeventy-four thouſand rubles (57,400*l.*) which, conſidering the nature of the property, is a capital beyond eſtimation. Catharine, by her profuſion in this way, had nearly diſpoſed of all her domains; but the confiſcated eſtates and ſtaroſties in Poland conſtitute the fund to which the preſent emperor has recourſe. It need not be mentioned, that a population of eighty-two thouſand males in Ruſſia or Poland muſt occupy an immenſe diſtrict.

* All that Paul's talents have enabled him to do for the reſtoration of a ſort of equilibrium between his receipts and diſburſements, is reduced at laſt to an exorbitant tax, which he has juſt laid on all the claſſes of his ſlaves. The poll-tax of the wretched vaſſals has been doubled, and a new tax has been impoſed upon the nobles, which however the vaſſals muſt ultimately pay.

in-

inspired by his known rigor and activity, at first set at fault the dark intrigues of knaves and villains, who had turned the treasures of the state to their own profit. The prevention of the scandalous dilapidations of these treasures would double the amount; and it is to be presumed, that, everything being renewed, the robbers will be obliged to suspend their operations for a time; but, when once they are acquainted with the emperor's course, they will regulate their own accordingly; they will dig other mines, and excavate new drains; pillage and prevarication will revive, and be reduced to a system, as before. Theft is a vice inherent in the Russian government, and springs from the character of the nation, in which manners, probity, and public spirit are wanting*.

* The French author confesses, that while he was writing this, he scarcely expected to find the same infamous conduct triumphing under a *republican form* of government, and in a *regenerated* nation.

It

It muſt be confeſſed that, morally ſpeaking, the people about Paul are better than thoſe that were about his mother, and that he will be more culpable than ſhe if he allow the ſame diſorders to prevail. It is true that Catharine pretended to guide, and that Paul, on the contrary, will ſuffer himſelf to be led; he would feel himſelf humbled, however, in following the advice of a man who wiſhed to appear better informed than himſelf. The perſon who has more immediate influence on his actions than his miniſters, or even his miſtreſs will ever have, is a *valet-de-chambre*, by birth a Turk, made a ſlave in his infancy, and brought up in his houſe. To this Turk, named Ivan Pavlovitch, the generals and great men are eager to pay their court, as the real fountain of Paul's private favor. Love is the ſtrongeſt and moſt excuſable of paſſions: its exceſſes and abuſes, therefore, appear leſs odious, and the reign of favorites, or of

miſtreſſes,

miſtreſſes, will never be ſo humiliating as that of valets. Beſide their bad education, which gives riſe to a juſt prejudice againſt them, the influence a prince allows them has always ſomething mean and repulſive, and ſavors ſtrongly of the water-cloſet*.

* This Ivan Pavlovitch is at preſent counſeller of ſtate, and has the title of excellency. Many lackeys, *Hof*, or *Kammer-fouriers*, gentlemen of the bed-chamber, are every day riſing to the higheſt poſts. Thus extremes meet each other: the Muſcovite licentiouſneſs leads to that equality of rights which it conſiders with horror: but here it is a real calamity. A great Ruſſian lord was accuſtomed to hold out his hand familiarly to every ſcullion or ſhoeblack that he met at court, ſtiling them *bratt*, or *batiouſchka*, brother or father. A gentleman expreſſing ſurpriſe at this familiarity, the lord ſaid, " It is from " policy, Sir: between this and to-morrow, theſe fel- " lows may become my colleagues." Such is Ruſſian equality: it is that of Tarquin cutting off the heads of his talleſt poppies, or of a ſultan creating his water-carrier prime viſier.

CHAP. V.

HAS PAUL REASON TO FEAR THE FATE OF PETER III.?

Parallel between Paul and his father—Portrait of the reigning empreſs—The grand-duke Alexander—The grand-duke Conſtantine—Zubof—N. Soltikof—Markof—Arkatof—Repnin—Suvarof, and Valerian Zubof—Traits of the character of Paul, and his principal courtiers or miniſters—His portrait—Anecdotes of his conduct when grand-duke.

PAUL, in his mode of life when grand-duke, and his conduct ſince his acceſſion, ſo ſtrongly reſembles his father, that, changing names and dates, the hiſtory of the one might be taken for

for the hiſtory of the other. Both were educated in a perfect ignorance of buſineſs, and reſided at a diſtance from court, where they were treated as priſoners of ſtate rather than heirs to the crown; and whenever they preſented themſelves, appeared as aliens and ſtrangers, having no concern with the royal family. The aunt of the father (Elizabeth) acted preciſely as the mother of the ſon has done ſince. The endeavors of each were directed, to prolong their infancy and to perpetuate the feebleneſs of their minds. The young princes were both diſtinguiſhed by perſonal vivacity and mental inſenſibility, by an activity which, untrained and neglected, degenerated into turbulence: the father was ſunk in debauchery; the ſon, loſt in the moſt inſignificant trifles. An unconquerable averſion to ſtudy and reflection gave to both that infatuated taſte for military parade, which would probably have diſ-

played

played itſelf leſs forcibly in Paul had he been a witneſs of the ridicule they attached to Peter *. The education of Paul, however, was much more attended to

* A ſingular oppoſition may commonly be obſerved between father and ſon, if any ſtriking feature exiſt in their characters. A well-diſpoſed ſon will frequently poſſeſs that virtue which is directly oppoſite to his father's vice, particularly if he have ſeen its folly, or fallen its victim. I could adduce private inſtances particularly intereſting to myſelf; but thoſe of three or four ſucceſſive kings of Pruſſia will make more impreſſion on the public. Frederic I. was as remarkable for his politeneſs and magnificence as his ſon for his roughneſs and parſimony. The great king of Pruſſia avoided both extremes. The grandfather protected and honored the ſciences oſtentatiouſly; the ſon perſecuted them, and endeavored to render them contemptible. The grandſon cheriſhed them, and cultivated them himſelf. The firſt was a royal courtier; the ſecond, a royal corporal; the third, a royal hero. This contraſt between father and ſon has not been obſervable for a long time in Ruſſia, as one has not been the other's ſucceſſor; but it is now about to appear in a very ſtriking manner. Catharine and Paul are the two extremes, and the grand-duke Alexander promiſes fair to be at ſome future day the happy mean between both.

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than than of his father. He was ſurrounded in infancy by perſons of merit, and his youth promiſed a capacity of no ordinary kind*. It is even thought, that the ſingularities which he has ſince contracted are to be aſcribed rather to the modes of life which he has in a manner been obliged to adopt, than to the natural faults of his diſpoſition. It muſt alſo be allowed, that he is exempt from many of the vices which diſgraced Peter: temperance and regularity of manners are prominent features of his character; features the more commendable, as they are rarely to be found in a Ruſſian autocrate. To the ſame cauſe, education,

* Louis XIV. and Frederic the Great, loaded with favors and honors thoſe who had ſuperintended their education. The aged Epinus, Paul's tutor, is threatened with the fate of Seneca and Burrhus. That of colonel la Harpe and major Meſſon, who were tutors to his ſon, would be ſtill leſs mild, ſhould they fall again into the hands of Paul.

and

and his knowledge of the language and character of the nation, is it owing that he differs from his father in other valuable qualities. If he has the wisdom to profit by these advantages, he will not fall into the same errors and misfortunes.

The similarity which, in some instances, has marked their conduct towards their wives, is still more striking; and in their amours, a singular coincidence of taste is observable. Catharine and Mary were the most beautiful women of the court, yet both failed to gain the affections of their husbands. Catharine had an ambitious soul, a cultivated mind, and the most amiable and polished manners. In a man, however, whose attachments were confined to soldiers, to the pleasures of the bottle, and the fumes of tobacco, she excited no other sentiment than disgust and aversion. He

was ſmitten with an object leſs reſpectable, and leſs difficult to pleaſe. The counteſs Vorontzof, fat, ugly in her perſon, and vulgar in her manners, was more ſuitable to his depraved military taſte, and ſhe became his miſtreſs *.

In like manner, the regular beauty of Mary, the unalterable ſweetneſs of her diſpoſition, her unwearied complaiſance, her docility as a wife, and her tenderneſs as a mother, have not been ſufficient to prevent Paul from attaching himſelf to Miſs Nelidof, whoſe diſpoſition and qualities better accord with his own. She is ugly and diminutive; but ſeems deſirous, by her wit and addreſs, to compenſate for the diſadvantages of her perſon: for a woman

* She got drunk with him, and ſwore like a trooper: ſhe ſquinted, and ſpat when ſhe was talking.

to

to be in love with Paul, it is neceſſary ſhe ſhould reſemble him*.

On their acceſſion to the throne, neither the father nor the ſon were favorites either of the court or the nation, yet both acquired immediate popularity and favor. The firſt ſteps of Paul appeared to be directed, but improved, by thoſe of Peter. The liberation of Koſciuſzko and other priſoners brought to public recollection the recal of Biren, Munich, and Leſtocq, with this difference, that Peter III. did not diſgrace theſe acts of clemency and juſtice, by ridiculous violences, or by odious and groundleſs perſecutions. Both iſſued ukaſes extremely favorable to the nobility, but

* He has lately proved fickle. Miſs Nelidof, who lived on tolerable terms with the empreſs, is diſmiſſed, and a young lady of the name of Lapukhin is the favorite.

from motives eſſentially different, and little to the honor of the ſon. The father granted to the Ruſſian gentry thoſe natural rights which every man ought to enjoy; while the object of the ſon was merely to revive thoſe diſtinctions which in the preſent day are become obſolete and ridiculous in the eyes of many.*. In the conduct which he has obſerved towards the clergy, Paul, however, has ſhewn himſelf a ſuperior politician: inſtead of inſulting the prieſts, and obliging them to ſhave their beards, he has beſtowed the orders of the empire on the biſhops, to put them on a

* Paul has now taken it into his head to create an heraldic nobility in Ruſſia! Formerly this gothic inſtitution was unknown there. The tzar Fedor even ordered the patents, of which ſome families would have availed themſelves, to be burned. Have the Ruſſians but now reached the twelfth century? They were the only nation in Europe, who, in their rapid progreſs to civiliſation, bounded over this folly.

footing

footing with the nobility, and flattered the populace and the prieſthood by founding churches, by pretended inſpiration*. In

* A ſoldier in the guards having ſtood ſentry at a door of the ſummer palace (an old wooden houſe in which Elizabeth reſided), went to his captain, pretending he had a ſecret to communicate. He informed him, that while he was on duty, he ſaw a light in the uninhabited apartments of the palace, and preſently ſome perſon knocked at the door at which he ſtood, and called him by name. He had the courage to look through the chinks in the door, and there beheld St. Michael. The ſaint ordered him to go to the emperor, and tell him that he muſt build him a church on that ſpot. In conſequence, the ſoldier begged him to ſpeak to the emperor, or he muſt take the liberty to do it himſelf, in obedience to his miſſion. The officer treated the viſionary as a madman, and ſent him about his buſineſs; he, however, mentioned the adventure to the major, who thought proper to relate it to Paul. The ſoldier was called, and ordered to repeat the account of his viſion. The emperor told him, that St. Michael ſhould be obeyed, for he had already been inſpired with the deſign of building him a church, and had even the plan prepared. On this he ſent for the model of a church, which he had ready in his cloſet. Does not this ſound like a legend? yet this farce took place at the court of Ruſſia in the month of December 1796,

In his military operations, however, his policy appears to have abandoned him, becauſe here he gave the reins to his ruling paſſion. The quick and total change of diſcipline he has introduced in his armies has created him nearly as many enemies as there are officers and ſoldiers. The preference he gives to the old Germans in his ſervice may prove as fatal to him as it did to his father. In the diſtruſt and ſuſpicions which inceſſantly haunt him, his inferiority to his father is alſo evident. One

1796, and the author was, in part, a witneſs to it. The palace is pulling down, and a church and a new palace are begun, dedicated to *monſeigneur* Michael.—*Goſpodi pomiloï* (1)!—The miracle is unfolded, when it is known that a couſin of the ſoldier was one of Paul's valets-de-chambre; and that the ſoldier, by way of recompenſe, was promoted to the ſame poſt. We may expect ſoon to ſee him counſellor of ſtate.

(1) The uſual exclamation which the Ruſſians make, croſſing themſelves at the ſame time, when they ſee anything extraordinary. It is one of the burdens of the litanies, "Lord have "mercy!"

of

of the firſt acts of Peter III. was to aboliſh the political inquiſition eſtabliſhed by Elizabeth; whereas Paul has proſecuted no ſcheme with greater alacrity than that of eſtabliſhing a ſyſtem of ſpies, and deviſing means for the encouragement of informers. The blind confidence of the father was his ruin, but it flowed from a humanity of diſpoſition always reſpectable. The diſtruſt of the ſon may not ſave him: it is the offspring of a timorous mind, which by its ſuſpicions is more apt to provoke than to elude treaſon.

From the conformity of character obſervable, in ſo many particulars, in theſe two princes, we might be led to conclude that the cataſtrophe of one will be that of the other: but this ſeems at preſent not at all probable; for, ſtriking as is the reſemblance between Peter and Paul, the perſons who compoſe their courts,

courts, and the circumſtances of the times, are no leſs ſtrikingly different.

In the firſt place, the character of Mary, as a wife, is wholly oppoſite to that of Catharine: ſweetneſs of diſpoſition is her chief characteriſtic. Her mildneſs, patience, and modeſty, have been ſeverely proved by the moſt rigorous and whimſical treatment; and, perhaps, by the perſevering exerciſe of theſe qualities, ſhe may in the end triumph. Her time is employed in a ſucceſſion of duties and occupations ſuitable to her ſex and her dignity. The education of her children, from whom ſhe has too long been reluctantly ſeparated, is at preſent a ſource of happineſs to her. Her attention to her huſband has enabled her to endure fatigues and exerciſes the leaſt ſuitable to her ſex and her character. How often has ſhe been ſeen to attend him on horſeback, at the weariſome reviews

of

of Gatſhina and Pavlofsky? Though exhauſted with heat and fatigue, ſometimes drenched with rain, or covered with ſnow, ſhe has ſtill, by her ſmiles, expreſſed her acquieſcence*. She is, perhaps,

* He frequently poſted the grand-ducheſs on a height, to ſerve as a mark or point of attack, to his troops, while he defended the approaches. One day, I remember, he placed her thus in the ruinous balcony of an old wooden manſion, round which he diſpoſed his troops for defence. One party of troops he had given to major Lindener, with orders to make the attack according to his own plan. This plan was to eſtabliſh the reputation of the major, and Paul prepared for the moſt able reſiſtance. The princeſs, meanwhile, remained fixed on the tower, expoſed to a heavy rain. Paul haſtened to every point where he expected the enemy, and pranced about amid the rain as proudly as Charles XII. in a ſhower of muſket-balls. One hour paſſed after another; the rain redoubled its violence, and no enemy appeared. Paul, entertaining a high opinion of his Pruſſian, preſumed that he had made a ſkilful march behind the wood, to ſurpriſe him more effectually. Accordingly he viſited, changed and reinforced his advanced poſts every moment, and ſent out parties to reconnoitre and ſcour the country. Frequently a noble impatience getting the better of him or his horſe, he gallopped a conſiderable way to meet,

perhaps, more careful of her time, and dedicates it to more uſeful purpoſes, than any lady in Ruſſia. Muſic, painting, etching, embroidery, are the arts in which ſhe excels, and which have alle-

meet the enemy, with whoſe tardineſs he began to be diſſatisfied. Preſently his impatience was changed into rage and vexation. Lindener had taken the field early, and made a long round through the eſtate of Soltikof, to arrive at the village: but he had gotten his column entangled among the hedges and gardens, which threw it into confuſion, and he knew not how to march out, while he had not room to form his line. The aides-de-camp, who came from Paul every moment to order him to make haſte, completely confuſed his mind; and he could find no reſource but to pretend he was ſeized with a violent colic, haſten home, and leave his troops to themſelves. Paul, enraged at having made ſuch an excellent diſpoſition of his forces in vain, ſpurred on his horſe as hard as he could gallop to the palace, there to digeſt his rage; leaving his wife, his army, and thoſe whom he had invited to ſee this famous manœuvre, wet to the ſkin. They had waited from five in the morning till one in the afternoon; and much in this manner did Mary ſpend all her mornings, with one or two young ladies at moſt; one of whom too was Paul's favorite, and received all the attention of him and his courtiers.

viated the ſolitude in which ſhe lived. Reading and ſtudy are with her not ſo much a buſineſs as a recreation; and the management of domeſtic affairs, and the diſtribution of charities, ſerve happily to occupy her hours. Tall, well made, and ſtill in the prime of life, ſhe is rather handſome than pretty; ſhe has more majeſty than grace, and leſs wit than ſentiment. She is a dutiful daughter and an affectionate ſiſter, as well as a faithful wife and an excellent mother. Far from forgetting her country and her relations, the ſplendor which ſurrounds her, and the diſtance which ſeparates them, ſerve but to increaſe the warmth of her affection and the vividneſs of her remembrance. Her numerous relations are always in her mind; her correſpondence with them occupies many hours of tranquil happineſs, and her felicity is doubled by making thoſe whom ſhe loves partakers of it. She has not,

like the ambitious Catharine, flattered the Ruſſians by adopting their manners, their language, and their prejudices: ſhe has not attempted to gain the eſteem of this nation by deſpiſing her own, and bluſhing at her origin; but has made herſelf beloved for her goodneſs, and reſpected for her virtues*. We might, perhaps, grieve for her as a wife, were it not that the attachment of her charming family ought to be a ſource of ſufficient happineſs to her, and Ruſſia may not improbably one day be indebted to her for national content. Her fruitfulneſs enſures a more tranquil

* Nothing can be more aſtoniſhing than that ſuch a man as Mirabeau could relate, in his Secret Correſpondence, ſuch a ſilly anecdote of the grand-ducheſs of Ruſſia. The young man, who is repreſented as the hero and relater of the ſtory, was aſſuredly never in the company of that princeſs, or even at the court of Ruſſia; and there is no truth in the ſcenery of this adventure, which would appear flat, ridiculous, and unworthy notice, had it not been related by Mirabeau.

and natural ſucceſſor, and the generous blood which ſhe has tranſmuted into the branch of Holſtein will mitigate, perhaps, the barbarity which it derives from the houſe of Romanof *.

It appears from this ſketch, that Paul would have nothing to apprehend from the empreſs, even though the love of the nation for her, and its averſion to him, were to increaſe. The guards and the people would in vain entreat Mary to aſcend her huſband's throne; ſhe would reject with horror the invitation. Paul,

* What I ſay of this princeſs is the homage of truth: ſhe well knows, and I more ſtrongly feel, it cannot be that of gratitude. It muſt be confeſſed too, that her good qualities are ſingularly obſcured by a petty vanity, which makes her think and act like a perſon raiſed from a low ſtation. The princeſs Dorothy of Wirtemberg, become Mary of Holſtein-Romanof, might diſpenſe with this gothic haughtineſs; for her children, though grand-dukes, are diſqualified by their paternal deſcent for admiſſion to a chapter in Germany.

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however, never treated her with becoming respect till he became emperor*. The court then saw with astonishment this husband, hitherto so harsh and uncouth, change at once his conduct towards her. On his accession, he granted her the sum of five hundred thousand rubles (50,000 *l.*) for her private expenses, promising her at the same time a more ample provision†. He solicited the return of Mrs. Benkendorf, whom he had some years before dismissed from the service of his wife with circumstances of great indignity. To furnish Mary with occupations suitable to the bene-

* This period was soon at an end. I am informed, that Mary was put under arrest for twelve hours, for having given one of her women some trifling order which Paul did not approve. It appears that this warlike emperor conducts everything in a military style, even in his bed-chamber.

† As grand-duchess, she had only 60,000 rubles (6000 *l.*) a-year; and with this sum was more generous, and did more good, than at present.

volence

volence of her diſpoſition and her ſex, he appointed her ſuperior of the convent of young ladies. In ſhort, he treated her with the reſpect and attention he ought always to have ſhewn her. A conduct, ſo unexpected from Paul, cauſed great ſenſations. Various motives have been aſſigned for this change: but whatever may be the true cauſe, this at leaſt is certain, that in his treatment of his wife, Paul wiſely differs from his father, who, after his acceſſion to the throne, behaved to Catharine with the ſame neglect and diſreſpect as before*.

We have already ſeen, that Catharine was prevented by death from the execution of another deſign, which would

* It muſt be confeſſed, however, that Catharine, whoſe amours with Staniſlaus Poniatofsky were a ſcandal to the whole court, gave her huſband ſtrong reaſons for ill treating her; and that the conduct of Mary is irreproachable.

have

have proved more fatal to Paul, but that the youth and natural good diſpoſition of his eldeſt ſon defeated it; who, by the purity of his morals and his perſonal charms, inſpires a high degree of admiration. That ideal character which enchants us in Telemachus is almoſt realiſed in him. He may be reproached, too, with the ſame faults which Fenelon has beſtowed on his imaginary pupil*; but theſe are, perhaps, not ſo much faults as the abſence of certain qualities not yet developed in him, or which have been ſtifled in his heart by the miſerable companions which have been allotted him. He inherits from Catharine magnanimity of ſentiment and an unalterable equality of temper; a mind juſt and

* "With a noble and well-diſpoſed heart, he appeared neither obliging nor ſenſible to friendſhip, nor "liberal, nor grateful for the pains taken on his account: neither was he prompt to acknowledge merit," &c.—Telemachus, book xvi.

penetrating, and uncommon discretion; with the alloy, however, of a cautious disposition, a circumspection unsuitable to his age, and which might be taken for dissimulation, did it not evidently proceed rather from the delicate situation in which he was placed between his father and grandmother, than from his heart, which is naturally frank and ingenuous. He possesses his mother's stature and beauty, as well as her mildness and benevolence, while in none of his features does he resemble his father. Paul, conjecturing the intentions of Catharine in favor of this son, has always felt coldly towards him; at the same time he discovers in him no resemblance of character, and no conformity of taste with himself; for Alexander appears to do what his father requires of him, from a principle of filial duty rather than compliance with his own inclinations. His humanity has acquired him the

the hearts of the ſoldiers, his good ſenſe the admiration of the officers: he is the conſtant mediator between the emperor and thoſe unhappy perſons who, by ſome trifling neglect, may provoke his anger. He requires not the dignity of grand-duke of Ruſſia to inſpire ſentiments of love and intereſt; nature has richly endowed him with the moſt amiable qualities, and his character of heir to the greateſt empire in the world, cannot render them indifferent to humanity. Heaven, perhaps, deſtines him to render thirty millions of people more free than they are at preſent, and more worthy of being ſo.

His character, however, though amiable, is paſſive. He wants the courage and confidence to diſcover the man of merit, always modeſt and unobtruſive; and it is to be feared, that the moſt importunate and impudent, who are ge-

nerally the moſt ignorant and vicious, will find little difficulty in procuring acceſs to him. Yielding too eaſily to the impulſes of others, he does not ſufficiently conſult his own heart and underſtanding. He appears to have loſt his reliſh for inſtruction, in loſing his maſters, and eſpecially colonel la Harpe, his firſt preceptor, to whom he owes all the knowledge he has acquired. A too premature marriage has contributed to diminiſh his energy; and it is probable that, notwithſtanding his good qualities, he will become in time the dupe of his courtiers, and even of his valets.

After this account of his character, it cannot be ſuppoſed that he will ever undertake of himſelf the odious project with which Catharine wiſhed to inſpire him. However, during the laſt illneſs of the empreſs, and for ſeveral days after her death, he was detained near the per-

ſon of his father with marks of tenderneſs, but not without ſymptoms of ſuſpicion. Scarcely was he allowed an hour in the day to viſit his young ducheſs. The emperor ſurrounded him with officers on whom he thought he could rely, and removed from their places all thoſe who were not his creatures and ſpies: he took from him his own regiment to give him another, and appointed him military governor of Peterſburg, naming at the ſame time, for his aſſiſtant or guardian, the ferocious Araktſcheief. The revenue of the young prince, which hitherto had not exceeded thirty thouſand rubles* (3000*l.*) was increaſed

* The great, the generous Catharine, whoſe magnificence aſtoniſhed the univerſe, and who gave rubles by millions to her favorites, left her ſon and grandſon in want of neceſſaries. Thirty thouſand rubles in paper for a grand-duke of all the Ruſſias! equal to ſixty thouſand livres French money (2500*l.*) Sometimes they were given in gold or ſilver: but they who had the management of the revenues of the young princes, took care to play the uſurer, ſo that in their hands they were diminiſhed nearly half.

to

to two hundred thouſand (20,000*l.*); and his father, by employing him in many trifling concerns, which detained him about his perſon nearly the whole day long, was manifeſtly deſirous of watching over him himſelf. It is impoſſible not to praiſe the emperor for having thus attached to himſelf, by means ſo mild and natural, the object of his unjuſt ſuſpicions; and we are pleaſed with theſe marks of affection for his children, to whom for fifteen years he never felt the reſolution to give the leaſt proof of his regard *.

The vulgar, who in general judge from the moſt deceitful appearances, perceiv-

* I am informed that the grand-duke Alexander has juſt been placed by Paul in the office of Beſborodko, as Frederic the Great was by his Officer in the office of one of the Pruſſian miniſters, to perform the functions of a ſimple clerk. Whether it be to procure him inſtruction, or to humble and puniſh him, the young prince will be one day the better for it.

ing in the grand-duke Alexander a reſerve and circumſpection of conduct, which they miſtook for pride, were at firſt charmed with his younger brother Conſtantine. This prince does not poſſeſs the advantage of ſo agreeable and prepoſſeſſing a perſon as his brother; grimace ſerves him for wit, and buffoonery procures him popularity. He exhibits more than one trait of reſemblance to the unhappy tzarovitch Alexis, eſpecially in his averſion for the ſciences, and the rudeneſs of his manners. He poſſeſſed, however, the germs of a ſound heart and underſtanding, which his firſt maſters neglected to cultivate, and which colonel la Harpe attempted in vain to improve, by extirpating the weeds that checked their growth. It will be happy for Conſtantine, when he arrives at an age of more diſcretion, ſhould he revive and cultivate them himſelf.

In other reſpects, he is a ſon worthy of his father: the ſame eccentricities, the ſame paſſions, the ſame ſeverity, and the ſame turbulence, diſtinguiſh him; but he will never poſſeſs the information which his father has acquired, nor his capacity, though he promiſes in time to equal, and even to ſurpaſs him, in the art of manœuvring a dozen automatons. Can it be believed, that a prince of ſeventeen, lively and vigorous, would, on the morning after his marriage to a young and beautiful woman, leave his bride at five o'clock to manœuvre in the court of his palace a couple of ſoldiers, who were placed there as centinels, and upon whom he inflicted at the ſame time repeated ſtrokes of his cane? Yet ſuch was the conduct of the grand-duke Conſtantine. I know not whether this military mania promiſes a good

good general, but ſure I am that it is a proof of a very bad huſband*.

Paul, though he found in his own family no cauſe to fear the misfortunes

* Some time before his marriage, he had a detachment of ſoldiers given him for his amuſement. After having tormented theſe poor wretches for ſome months, he went ſo far as to cane the major who commanded them. The major had the courage to complain to count Soltikof, and the favorite related the ſtory to the empreſs. She ordered her grandſon under arreſt, and took from him his ſoldiers, who were not returned to him till after his marriage.

Many other ſtories might be told of this young prince, but it would be only repeating the vulgar tricks of a boy without education. His grandmother perceived it too late to remedy it. In his childhood he bit and ſtruck his maſters; now he ſtrikes the officers at their exerciſe, and knocks out the teeth of the poor ſoldiers. The king of Sweden being with all the court at a ball given by Samoïlof, he ſaid to him, "Do you "know in whoſe houſe you are?—That of the "greateſt w—— in Peterſburg." His grandmother put him under arreſt.

of his father, or any attempt dangerous to his tranquillity, had not equal reaſon to be ſatisfied on the part of the nobility. It is certain that he was diſliked by them all, and for ten years was a ſubject of ridicule at the court of his mother: but Potemkin was no more. A diminutiveneſs in virtue as in vice, was the characteriſtic of all who approached the throne: no one poſſeſſed that ſtrength of capacity which is neceſſary to accompliſh a revolution, and all wanted that energy which great crimes demand. Catharine could, with more juſtice than the counteſs of Muralt, have beſtowed on her miniſters the epithet which ſhe gave to her wits*. A ſlight ſketch of each of theſe perſonages will be ſufficient to prove the truth of what I have advanced.

* It is well known that ſhe called them *Les dunces.*

Count

Count and prince Zubof, the laſt favorite of Catharine, was thirty years of age and upwards. He was far from poſſeſſing the genius and ambition of Orlof and Potemkin, though in the end he united in his perſon more power and credit than theſe celebrated favorites had ever enjoyed. Potemkin was indebted for his elevation almoſt ſolely to himſelf. Zubof owed his to the infirmities of Catharine. He increaſed in power, in riches, and in credit, becauſe the activity of Catharine was diminiſhed, her vigor abated, and her underſtanding impaired. During the laſt years of her life, this young man found himſelf literally emperor of all the Ruſſias. He had the folly to wiſh, or to appear, to direct everything; but, having no knowledge of the routine of affairs, he was obliged to reply, to thoſe who aſked him for inſtructions, *Sdélaïte kak prégedé*, "Do as before." Nothing equalled

his

his haughtineſs but the ſervility of thoſe who ſtrove to proſtrate themſelves before him; and it muſt be acknowledged, that the meanneſs of the Ruſſian courtiers has always ſurpaſſed the impudence of the favorites of Catharine. All crouched at the feet of Zubof: he ſtood erect, and thought himſelf great. Every morning a numerous court beſieged his doors, and filled his antichambers. Veteran generals and grandees of the empire did not bluſh to careſs his moſt inſignificant valets*. Stretched with indecent negligence on a ſofa, his little finger in his noſe, his eyes vacantly turned towards the ceiling, this young man, of a cold and vain phyſiognomy, ſcarçely deigned to pay attention to thoſe who ſurrounded him. He amuſed himſelf with the tricks of his ape, which leaped on the

* Theſe valets have been frequently ſeen to beat back the officers and generals who crowded round the doors, and prevented them from being ſhut.

ſhoulders

ſhoulders of his degraded courtiers, or converſed with his buffoon; while the veterans, under ſome of whom he had been a ſerjeant, the Dolgorukys, the Gallitzins, the Soltikofs, and all who were diſtinguiſhed for their exploits or their crimes, ſtanding around him, waited with profound ſilence till he condeſcended to turn his eyes towards them, that they might again proſtrate themſelves before him. The name of Catharine figured in his converſation, but he ſcarcely deigned to pay the heir of the crown that exterior reſpect which the etiquette of the court required; and even Paul was forced to humble himſelf before a petty officer of the guards, who, but a ſhort time before, had begged his pardon for having offended one of his dogs *. To obtain money or favors for his

* Paul had a dog of which he was fond. This dog, roaming round the palace, attempted to ſnatch a piece

his dependants, the grand-duke Conſtantine paid him the moſt aſſiduous court. Meanwhile, none of the twelve favorites of Catharine appeared ſo poorly endowed in perſon and mind as Zubof. In his elevation, he diſplayed no genius, no virtues, no paſſions, unleſs we account

piece of meat from a trumpeter belonging to the guards. The ſoldier gave him a blow over the head with his trumpet. The dog ran howling and bloody to the apartments of Paul, who was in a rage on hearing the ſtory. "Ah!" cried he, "everything "belonging to me, everything I love, is an object of "perſecution. I have but one dog, and they want to "kill it. Let the officer on guard be ſent to me, "and let him be puniſhed!" The officer on guard at that time was Zubof, who, informed of the rage of the grand-duke, went and threw himſelf at the feet of Soltikof, his patron, to beg he would go with him and ſolicit his pardon. It was with difficulty Soltikof could obtain it; for Paul was perſuaded that his dog had been beaten out of hatred to him, and becauſe he was deteſted by the guards. The trumpeter maintained that he did not know to whom the dog belonged; and this Paul took for a freſh inſult, for which he would certainly have inflicted a ſevere puniſhment, had it been in his power.

as ſuch the vanity and avarice which diſtinguiſhed him; accordingly, when his power expired, his emptineſs was apparent. The immenſe wealth of his family, and the vaſt eſtates extorted by his father from the landholders of his provinces, are the monuments which he has left of his adminiſtration *. The death of the empreſs reduced him in a moment to the obſcurity from which ſhe had drawn him; as the ephemeron of a day, produced by the ſun, flutters in his kindly beams, but cannot ſurvive the paſſing breeze. Zubof lamented Catharine, as a ſon bewails the loſs of his mother; and this was the only moment of his life in which he appeared at all intereſting. It is alſo juſt to obſerve,

* Zubof's father was made a judge; and, to enrich himſelf, he bought up all the old cauſes in the court, or made the parties relinquiſh them to him, and then decided them himſelf, or cauſed them to be decided in his favor.

that, mingling with the crowd, he diſcovered more readily the ſtation that was ſuitable to his inſignificance, than the courtiers did theirs, which ought to have been ſtill by his ſide. They ſhewed themſelves yet more baſe than he was humbled; and though for the firſt days his antichambers were deſerted, for a long time afterwards; when he appeared at court, the ſtupid courtiers made way for him, and proſtrated themſelves before him as before a ſovereign; ſo difficult is it for ſlaves to recover the dignity of manhood! We muſt do him the farther juſtice to acknowledge, that he did not, like a Mentchikof and a Biren, people the deſerts of Siberia; though, at the inſtigation of Eſterhazy and other French emigrants, he committed acts of great injuſtice and inquiſitorial violence; and the calamities of Poland may in part be conſidered as his work.

The

The emperor, who, at the moment of his acceſſion, treated him with aſtoniſhing reſpect, confirmed him, in the moſt flattering terms, in all his employments; beſtowed on his brother the firſt order of Ruſſia, ſolely for having undertaken a journey to Gatſhina; made him a preſent of one of his military uniforms;—the emperor, I ſay, having meaſured his man, perceived that he had nothing to fear from him; accordingly, the ſeal was ſuddenly put on his chancery, and it was the grand-duke Conſtantine, lately his moſt aſſiduous courtier, who executed this commiſſion, as officer of the police, with all the rudeneſs which is natural to him*. His ſecretaries

* It is to be obſerved, that Zubof, who had all places in his hands, and the ſecretaries, who had all public affairs in theirs, were ſent off in four-and-twenty hours, without making them give any account, or demanding any information. The confuſion this occaſioned will appear in the ſequel.

were

were banifhed, or driven from the court*; his creatures exiled, or impri- foned;

* The two moft famous are Altefti and Gribof-fky. The former is a Ragufan, whom the Ruffian minifter Bolkunof took from a merchant's compting-houfe in Conftantinople to employ him in his office. When war was declared, he came to Peterfburg to folicit employment, and got into the fervice of Zubof, who was growing in favor. He underftood feveral languages, and was not deftitute of fenfe. He foon became the penman of Zubof, and even of the em-prefs. A pamphlet, which he wrote in French againft the king and revolutionifts of Poland, and in which he treated the former as a factionary, the latter as jaco-bins, ftuffing it with epithets, lies, ftupidities, and flat-tery, eftablifhed his reputation and his fortune. This libel was fpread abroad like a manifefto. Titles, orders of knighthood, and flaves, were prefently lavifhed on Altefti. Not contented with thefe gifts, he enriched himfelf prodigioufly by other means. The Polifh con-federates, the governments, the Coffacs, &c. were eager to purchafe his protection and fervices by hard ducats. All the affairs of Poland were in his hands, and on him depended wealth, liberty, and life; for he made out the lifts of the profcribed. He grew uncommonly haughty and impudent; but an impertinent trick he played count Golowin, who had the courage to com-plain of it, at length ruined him. He had orders to

ſoned *; and all the officers of his ſtaff, or of his ſuit, upwards of two hundred

retire to his eſtates ; but Zubof had obtained his recal, and he was on the point of re-entering into office a few days before the death of Catharine. One of the firſt orders of Paul was an injunction to him to depart in twenty-four hours. Alteſti has talents, but is ungrateful: he occaſioned the diſgrace of Bolkunof, his firſt benefactor.

Gribofsky, the other ſecretary, was a Ruſſian. He had not the underſtanding of his colleague, but perhaps a better heart, and acquired nearly equal influence. He was the ſon of a clergyman, and began his career as a copyiſt in the office of Potemkin. In leſs than two years, under Zubof, he attained the rank of colonel, and his luxury and expenſive mode of living aſtoniſhed and diſguſted all Peterſburg. The fineſt ladies admired his perſon, and he was flattered by the greateſt lords. He kept a band of muſic, buffoons, miſtreſſes, and horſes. In the ſpring he gave ſuppers, with deſſerts of fruit not to be ſeen at the empreſs's table; and I was preſent at an entertainment where every one paid his ſhot, the deſſert of which, furniſhed by him, was reckoned, in conſequence of the ſeaſon, at five hundred rubles (50 l.)

* Among others, Kapief, a young man, who would have deſerved a better fate had his heart been equal to his

hundred in number, were obliged to join immediately their reſpective corps, or give in their reſignation. To remove him with leſs indignity from the palace, a large manſion was given him as a preſent, and all his offices were then withdrawn. He did not himſelf give in his reſignation of thirty different employments till in reality he no longer held them. The emperor created Nicholas Soltikof field-marſhal, and reſtored to his office the adminiſtration of military affairs, which had been taken from it by Zubof. It was then that the diſorders and abuſes which pervaded the ſervice were diſcovered. The favorite, who, to enrich himſelf, carried on a war in Perſia, the conducting of which

his head: he was accuſed of having ſaid to one of his friends, whom he met in Paul's new uniform, "Good morning: what! you are going to a maſquerade!"

was entrusted to his brother*, had not condescended to submit to the college of war the ordinary reports; and the troops which he had marched towards Gallicia were equally neglected; so that, when it became necessary to make a new arrangement of the army, it was not known where the greater part of the regiments were, and still less in what condition they would be found. Officers, who had to rejoin their corps, knew not to what quarter of the world they should set off to find them, and in vain attended the offices to obtain the necessary information †.

A few

* At the empress's table, during the visit of the king of Sweden, the conversation turned on some news just brought by a courier. "It is but a trifle," said Zubof to a Swede: "my brother sends *us* word, that he "has gained a battle, and conquered a province: that "is nothing new."

† This was frequently the case in Russia; but the following will excite more astonishment. A Frenchman,

A few weeks after, Zubof obtained permiſſion, or rather received orders, to quit Ruſſia. Like all his predeceſſors, he went into Germany to exhibit the brilliants, the orders, and the portraits which he had received from Catharine: but of all the gifts of his old miſtreſs, the rubles are thoſe which he has uſed

man, the chevalier Roger, having ſolicited count Soltikof, through the medium of major M**, to give him the poſt of commandant of ſome remote place, as he wiſhed for ſuch a retirement, where he might live with his wife more cheaply, the miniſter gave orders to ſee whether any ſuch place was vacant. Being informed that fort Peter and Paul in the government of Oremburg was without a commandant, Roger was appointed to the poſt, and ſet off. Some months after, major M** received a letter from Roger in the following words: "I am arrived in the country where my "fort was ſaid to be; but judge of my ſurpriſe on being "informed that it was deſtroyed by Pugatſhef twenty "years ago, and exiſts no longer. Finding myſelf "in a deſert with my family, without an aſylum, "and without reſource, I have been obliged to re"turn to Oremburg." This letter was ſhewn to the miniſter, who gave Roger another poſt.

with

with moſt diſcretion. After having taken with him a girl diſguiſed as a valet, he fell in love at Tœplitz with a pretty emigrant of the name of Roche-Aimon: but he there ſoon became acquainted with the young princeſſes of Courland, who, with the graces and beauty they inherit from their mother, and the immenſe fortunes which their father will leave them, are the moſt deſirable heireſſes in Europe. He endeavoured, accordingly, to pay his court to the old duke, whom a little before he had attempted to ſtrip of his ſovereignty, and towards whom he had affected ſo much haughtineſs at Peterſburg. The duke expreſſed to him his reſentment and contempt; but Zubof, unaccuſtomed to meet with obſtacles, conceived the deſign of carrying off the eldeſt princeſs by force. Whether, however, the duke complained to the emperor, or Paul was actuated by other motives, he diſpatched an order

to Zubof to return to Ruſſia; and it is probable that the laſt favorite of Catharine has, by this time, acted his laſt part.

Count Nicholas Soltikof, field-marſhal, miniſter of war, and grand-maſter to the young grand-dukes * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * *

The old vice-chancellor Oſtermann, whom Paul haſtened to advance to the poſt of chancellor, in order to get rid of him, burdened with old age and infirmities, no longer appeared at court but as a remembrance of paſt times. He was far from acting under Catharine the part which his father had played under the reign of Anne, and from deſerving the ſame diſgrace from Paul which his father had merited from Elizabeth. He had the name only of vice-

chancellor

chancellor, and the dispatch of some passports which were given him to sign. Diplomatic and foreign affairs were divided in the office of Zubof between Besborodko and Markof, who were the actual authors of all the ministerial papers; and the first of whom particularly enjoyed an immense credit, which even balanced that of the favorite.

Besborodko and Markof were perfect contrasts to each other. The one was awkward, clownish, negligent, disorderly, his stockings about his heels, and had the gait of an elephant; though richly habited, he appeared always as if he had dressed himself at the conclusion of a debauch, which still oppressed him with the stupidity of drowsiness: the other was so minutely attentive to dress, that he might pass for the ridiculous marquis of some of our comedies; and so absurdly affected that he never en-

tered

tered a room or bowed but according to the rules of a dancing-maſter, never walked but on his toes, and never took ſnuff without diſplaying the brilliants which ſparkled on his fingers. When he ſpoke too, it was always in the ear of the perſon with whom he diſcourſed; his converſation conſiſted of bon-mots, his anſwers of points; and the ſame ſtudy and affectation were perceptible in his attempts at wit as in his dreſs and manners.

Beſborodko, notwithſtanding the depravity of his morals, is active, and occaſionally laborious. Advanced from the ſituation of clerk in the chancery to the rank of prime-miniſter*, he is well acquainted

* At firſt a writer in the office of Romanzof, he became ſecretary to Catharine, and the following is ſaid to have led the way to his fortune. Having been ordered one day to draw up a ukaſe, he forgot it, and appeared before the empreſs without it. On her aſking

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI ... TANJORE

acquainted with the routine of affairs, and writes with facility; but the negligence and diſorder which characteriſe his perſon are equally perceptible in all the offices under his adminiſtration, and particularly in the management of poſts, of which he is director-general, and which is an office open to the inſpection of every one*.

ing for it, Beſborodko, without being diſconcerted, took from his pocket a ſheet of blank paper, in which he began to read, as if it contained the ukaſe in queſtion. Catharine, ſatisfied with the language, aſked for the paper, that ſhe might ſign it, and was much aſtoniſhed to find it blank. This facility of extemporaneous compoſition ſtruck her; and, far from reproaching the ſecretary with his negligence or deceit, ſhe made him miniſter of ſtate, for knowing the ſtyle of a ukaſe by heart, and having had the boldneſs to impoſe it on her.

* Of all parts of the country, the eſtates of the director-general of the poſt were thoſe where horſes were never to be had, and where travellers were ſure to be *taken in.*

Before

Before his appointment, it was the beſt conducted public inſtitution in Ruſſia: under his adminiſtration it will ſoon become the worſt. His office is a devouring gulph, from which nothing returns; and the advantages which principally diſtinguiſh his houſe are the multitude of entrances and ſecret ſtair-caſes by which he contrives to eſcape, in quitting, or to ſhun, in entering, the unhappy expectants, who wait whole days in the antichamber*. It is neceſſary to have the clue of Ariadne to reach this Minotaur; who, without doubt, would be found at the extremity of his labyrinth,

* It is ſaid, that an attorney, not being able to get ſight of him, at length contrived to ſlip into his carriage, and wait for him there. Beſborodko, aſtoniſhed at the boldneſs of the ſcheme, heard the man's tale, and promiſed to make his buſineſs known to the empreſs: but the man would not quit his poſt, and remained in the carriage till Beſborodko came out of the palace, that he might have an anſwer. Report ſays it was a favorable one.

engaged

engaged in making ſome young beauty his prey.

If the morals of Markof are not edifying, it muſt be admitted that he does not traverſe the *Metſchanſky** like Beſborodko. He is attached to a tragic actreſs of the name of Hus, who has great influence over him, and who at leaſt endeavours to be reſpectable in the character of mother, which her admirer often ſucceeds in conferring upon her†. On the talent which is aſcribed to theſe two miniſters, of being able, the one to tranſlate impromptu into Ruſs, the other into French, the miniſterial

* The name of the quarter of Peterſburg in which girls of the town moſt abound.

† The emperor, as a refinement of vengeance, forbad la Hus to accompany Markof in his exile; ſaying, ſhe belonged to the court, and not to him. This tragic actreſs, who poſſeſſes conſiderable talents, had converted the French theatre into an ariſtocracy, over which ſhe preſided.

papers,

papers, I ſet but little value. All the compoſitions I have read of the one or of the other, eſpecially of Markof, have neither been diſtinguiſhed for elegance of ſtyle, nor clearneſs of expreſſion. I do not ſpeak of logic, the details which they have had to give having been generally too abſurd to aſſort with it. Beſides, under Catharine II. Ruſſian diplomatics did not require ſplendid talents. She employed two means more perſuaſive than either argument or eloquence—threats and money, the effects of which are always fear and corruption. The prejudice of many parts of Europe, and eſpecially of Germany, in favor of Ruſſia, is aſtoniſhing. One might be led to conclude from it, that the cabinet of Peterſburg was compoſed of men of ſuperior abilities: the court of Vienna crouches beneath its influence, and that of Berlin has not yet been able to diſmiſs its fears and reſpect.

ſpect. Doubtleſs, if the intelligent ſtateſmen of Germany could have a clear view of thoſe men who have dazzled them, they would be aſhamed of having ſo long miſtaken the falſe luſtre of a corrupted throne for the true radiance of genius, paper for money, threats for greatneſs, and preſumption for ability.

Beſborodko, who had always worn ſhoes and buckles like Paul, and who was alſo extremely rich and powerful, was at firſt treated with reſpect*. Markof, who did not poſſeſs theſe advantages to the ſame degree, was diſmiſſed with indignity, and publicly diſgraced. He is the ſame perſon who was formerly

* He was made a *prince*, and was worthy of being one. He continued Paul's prime-miniſter; and it was he who, in the name of his maſter, declared war on the French republic; citing as a motive decrees, which I believe are known to himſelf. He is now dead.

ſent

ſent from Holland to Paris, where he is ſtill remembered by the appellation of the ſtupid Markof.

The preſent count Samoïlof, attorney-general of the empire, had no other merit to diſtinguiſh him than that of being the nephew of Potemkin, and bearing a ſlight and deceitful reſemblance of him. His capacity was unequal to the duties of his office, in right of which he was grand-treaſurer and preſident of the ſenate, and of all the courts of the empire. It was againſt his own inclination that he was called from the army to fill theſe civil employments. He acknowledged that he did not poſſeſs the neceſſary talents; but his deficiency was his chief recommendation, for they wanted a paſſive agent, who ſhould be unable, from want of capacity, to counteract the views of Catharine or her favorites. It was at his houſe that the infamous

infamous inquiſition re-aſſembled which Ann erected under the name of the *Secret Chancery*, which Peter III. thought it his duty to aboliſh, which Catharine revived under another form, and the worthy members of which Paul carefully diſperſes in the antichambers of particular houſes. The palace of Samoïlof, which is one of the moſt elegant in Peterſburg, contains ſeveral priſons for the detention of accuſed perſons, where they are ſafely kept till they can privately be diſpoſed of. It is apparently on this account alone that many conſider it as a public building. In other reſpects, Samoïlof was inſignificant and like the aſs carrying reliques. Paul, to reward him for the readineſs with which he cauſed the oath of fidelity to be taken by the ſenate, beſtowed on him four thouſand peaſants, under pretence that his mother had already promiſed them. Some days after he was ſuddenly re-

moved

moved from his place, and prince Kurakin appointed his fucceffor.

But the man againft whom the blood and tears of thoufands of victims cried moft loudly for vengeance, he who ought to have fuffered firft beneath the axe of juftice, if the fucceffor of Catharine had been endowed with firmnefs, equity, and humanity, was Arkarof, governor-general of Peterfburg. This man, or rather this favage, had diftinguifhed himfelf for a long time by a brutality of conduct worthy of an executioner of Attila. He was governor of Tver, where he exercifed a fyftem of robbery, the details of which would excite horror and appear incredible, when Catharine, towards the end of her life, placed him near her perfon. This is the man whom fhe judged worthy to be the guardian of her crown, when the French revolution, the Zubofs,

the Efterhazys, and perhaps her own remorfe, began to fill her with fufpicions and terror. He foon difplayed, in a more extenfive field, thofe horrid qualities which had been the fcourge of the provinces of Mofco and Tver. Upon the death of Catharine, the fall of Zubof, and the acceffion of Paul, the punifhment of this monfter was expected as an event that could not fail to take place. Innumerable victims of his tyrannies caft themfelves at the feet of Paul, and demanded juftice and vengeance. The emperor, however, granted no redrefs to complaints of abufe of power or oppreffion, but contented himfelf with commanding Arkarof to pay fome debts. Of all thofe who enjoyed the confidence of the mother, he was, by a horrible exception in favor of his talents, the only one who obtained the confidence of the fon. He was confirmed in all his old, and even raifed to new employ-

employments. Neverthelefs, the complaints of honeft men, and the cries of the people, increafed againft him. It is faid, that Paul, when on his way to Mofco to be crowned, found the road ftrewed with petitions againft this new Sejanus *.

From this account of four or five perfons, who held the reins of government at the death of Catharine, it appears that Paul had nothing to apprehend from them: all of them were rich, their fortunes made, and none of them young. It cannot, however, be too carefully obferved, with what eagerness Paul ftill loaded with wealth thefe blood-fuckers of the ftate, before he difcarded them. His motives are obvious: as foon as he thought he had no longer anything to fear from them, he difgraced

* He is now in difgrace, though not for his crimes.

them. The ſudden death of his mother prevented any other party from forming at court, and there was no individual at the head of the armies in a ſituation to undertake anything. The three generals in chief, who commanded then the principal armies of the empire, were as remote from each other, by means of their different manners, views, and characters, as by the immenſe diſtance which actually ſeparated them.

The moſt eminent was prince Nicholas Repnin, whoſe name has ſo often reſounded through Europe conjunctly with that of the celebrated Romanzof*. He

* I make no mention, likewiſe, of that old warrior, whom the ingratitude of Catharine, who was indebted to him for her firſt triumphs, will render for ever celebrated, no leſs than his own exploits. He was himſelf dying at the time of the empreſs's deceaſe; and, though he had the command of an army, his debility rendered him inactive. Paul wore mourning for him

He was, with this veteran warrior, the only general of ſignal merit in the armies of Catharine, whoſe appearance and perſon did not exhibit a perfect contraſt to their reputation. In the laſt war but one againſt the Turks, he acted a brilliant part as a general, and diſplayed

him three days, and ordered all his army to do the ſame. For twenty years he had left off viſiting the court; and, whether in retirement or in the camp, led a life as ſelfiſh as philoſophic; for he is leſs to be honored as a huſband or a father, than as a general. He parted from his wife, and remained as much a ſtranger to his family as la Fontaine. One of his ſons having finiſhed his ſtudies, came to the army to him to aſk a commiſſion. "Who are you?" ſaid Romanzof. "Your ſon."—"O, very well! you are grown up, I "ſee." After a few more queſtions *equally* paternal, the young man aſked, where he ſhould take up his abode, and what he was to do. "Why, to be ſure, "you are acquainted with ſome officer or other in the "camp!" ſaid his father. It is a fact no leſs ſingular, that his ſon, Sergius Romanzof, returning from his embaſſy to Sweden, aſked Nicholas Soltikof for a letter of recommendation to his father, that he might be well received by him.

great

great abilities as a negotiator at Conſtantinople. He was afterwards diſtinguiſhed in Poland by as much politeneſs as haughtineſs. He then ſubmitted ignominiouſly to the aſcendancy of Potemkin, who treated him as a reſpectable character of paſt times. In his old age he ſtill further diminiſhed his early reputation by an attachment to the myſteries of martiniſm and the illuminés; and we are at a loſs to determine, whether it was the humility of a devotee, the baſeneſs of a courtier, or the ſtoiciſm of a patriotic hero, that enabled him to bear the inſolence of Potemkin and the hatred of Catharine, who, while they availed themſelves of his military talents, loaded him with inſults. He had incurred the hatred of Catharine by declaring in favor of Paul, and adviſing him to aſſert his rights to the crown, of which his mother had only been proclaimed guardian and regent. In the laſt

war

war againſt the Turks, Repnin acted a very inferior part, yoking himſelf voluntarily to the car of Potemkin, leſt he ſhould otherwiſe not be harneſſed at all; for he was reſolved to ſerve, though they might be even unwilling to employ him. In the antichambers of the favorites he proſtituted his laurels and his white hairs more eagerly than a young officer who had ſtill his fortune to make. How different was Repnin here to Repnin when ambaſſador at Warſaw, giving audience to the king of Poland in his dreſſing-gown*! or rather, it was the ſame

* One day, the king coming to pay him a viſit, he ran and put on a morning-gown to receive him. After a trifling excuſe, and a ſlight bow, he turned his back to the looking-glaſs, which was oppoſite Staniſlaus, acting in a manner that would have diſgraced a merry-andrew, and which delicacy forbids me to mention. At Riga, he received d'Artois almoſt as rudely, pretending not to know him, and leaving him alone by the fire. He was piqued at the air of ſuperiority which the French prince aſſumed, and at his not ſaluting the guard, which paid him military honors.

character;

character; for the haughtieſt perſons will always be found to be the moſt ſervile.

When Potemkin, however, was detained from the camp by the pleaſures and feſtivities of Peterſburg, as has been already mentioned, Repnin, to whom he had left the command of the army during his abſence, ſo far emancipated himſelf as to neglect the order he had received to remain inactive. He ſuddenly paſſed the Danube, and, by a ſkilful march, ſurpriſed and defeated the grand army of the viſier Yuſſuf. This gallant and ſucceſsful action revived the faded laurels of Repnin. The court reſounded with his praiſes: they compared this bold and deciſive campaign with thoſe of Potemkin, who was content every winter to attack ſome fortreſſes, the capture of which coſt ſo much blood, and who had never found a Turkiſh army

to

to fight with. Roufed from his lethargy by this blow, which difgraced and threatened him, Potemkin abandoned his pleafures, and entered into Moldavia. His interview with Repnin was a terrible explofion, which the conqueror of the Turks fuftained with more firmnefs than was expected of him. But he was driven from the army, and obliged to acquiefce in his difmiffal, for having gained a moft decifive victory, and forced the Turks to folicit an ignominious peace: fuch was ftill the influence of Potemkin, and the condefcenfion of the ungrateful Catharine! On the death of Potemkin, which happened fhortly after, Repnin repaired to Peterfburg, and degraded his old age and his honors in the antichamber of Zubof, who, flattered to fee the old warrior in the number of his affiduous courtiers, appointed him govenor-general of Livonia. In the confternation

ſternation and rage into which Catharine was thrown by the maſſacre of the Ruſſians in Warſaw, he received orders to collect the regiments of his province, and to invade Poland. He was at this period the only general of great reputation, and the oldeſt in the army: he had the further ſatisfaction of ſeeing his ſovereign, contrary to her inclination, obliged to employ him. The regular and cautious march, however, of Repnin, through Lithuania, did not accord with the impatient vengeance of Catharine: ſhe thirſted for blood, for the blood of all the inhabitants of Warſaw; and ſhe let looſe from another quarter the furious Suvarof, who, as far as the gates of Prague, ſtrewed his rout with carcaſes. Repnin then received the ſevereſt inſult he had ever ſwallowed, but he digeſted it as readily as former ones. Suvarof was created field-marſhal, and ap-

pointed

pointed commander over the man whose orders the day before he had received, and by whom he was despised*. Catharine added even raillery to insult, by making a present of a house to Repnin, for having been passed over in this appointment. The whole army resented this treatment of the veteran; several

*Suvarof caused the first report sent him by Repnin to be read aloud to him two or three times over, in the presence of his staff, making a thousand antics, pretending to be deaf, that the reader might raise his voice, and astonished at receiving a report from prince Repnin, whom he thus cruelly rallied. Catharine was always very despotic, and always made seniority give way to favor. At the death of Potemkin, Kamenskoi, one of her best generals, took the command of the army as a matter of right, and sent his first report accordingly. He said, "Having taken the command in consequence of my seniority, &c." against which Catharine wrote in the margin, "Who gave you orders?" He then spoke of the disorder which he found prevailing among the troops, and in the margin Catharine wrote, "He dared not say a word while the prince was alive." In answer to his report, Kamenskoi received orders to quit the army.

generals

generals remonſtrated, and count John Soltikof, with generous pride, reſigned his commiſſion. Repnin alone, Repnin, who had moſt reaſon to be offended, and was moſt capable of making it felt, who could with impunity ſhew that he was ſuſceptible of reſentment and honor, like a ſtoic or chriſtian, ſubmitted to this diſgrace.

On his acceſſion, Paul at length created him field-marſhal, and the laſt warlike exploit of Repnin was the executing military vengeance on ſome villages in the government of Novgorod, on the occaſion to which we alluded in a former page.

Repnin, who has ſhewn himſelf a great general, as well as an imperious miniſter and a ſervile courtier, poſſeſſes ſome perſonal qualities rarely to be met with in Ruſſian generals. Not only his figure,

but

but his manners and carriage, are noble. His heart is humane *, and he is destitute alike of the Mufcovitifh groffnefs of his colleagues towards their inferiors †, and

* Particularly towards the foldiers. Reviewing a regiment of cavalry, he faid, " I inquire only about " the men: as to the horfes, they are bought by the co- " lonel, and therefore I know better care is taken of " them."

† His behaviour to his officers, however, while at Berlin, fhocked the Pruffians, to whom the haughtinefs of the Ruffian generals was unknown. At this place, it was matter of aftonifhment to fee Repnin gravely ftalking along, decorated with the badges of all his orders of knighthood, while a kniaz, Volkufky his nephew, feveral aides-de-camp, and Thiemann the martinift, his fecretary, followed him at fome paces diftance. Every time he turned about to utter a word, his attendants halted, and took off their hats. His political miffion, however, did not fucceed. This prince, a field-marfhal, formerly ambaffador triumphant at Conftantinople, and omnipotent at Warfaw, neither frightened nor cajoled the young king of Pruffia, whom Paul had ordered him to oblige to rejoin the coalition. Repnin, difmiffed from Berlin, repaired to Vienna, where the fuccefs of his negotiation is vifible. But one of his fecretaries, faid to be a Frenchman of the name of Aubert,

and that rapacious avarice which has always diſtinguiſhed them. On the contrary, he is compaſſionate and generous, and Lithuania is greatly indebted to him, for it was by him and prince Gallitzin that it was ſaved from total ruin.

A ſtranger, who has heard the name of Suvarof, wiſhes, on his arrival in Ruſſia, to ſee this hero. An old man is pointed out, of a weather-beaten and ſhrivelled figure, who traverſes the apartments of the palace, hopping on one foot, or is ſeen running and gamboling in the ſtreets, followed by a troop

Aubert, ſtole off with part of the papers and ſecrets of his embaſſy. This enraged Paul, and he diſmiſſed Repnin at his return, for not having ſucceeded at Berlin, and for having employed a Frenchman in his ſervice: however, as a mark of ſingular clemency, he is allowed to wear the uniform of armies which he has commanded with glory for forty years.

of boys, to whom he throws apples, to make them ſcramble and fight, crying himſelf, "I am Suvarof! I am Suvarof!" If the ſtranger ſhould fail to diſcover in this old madman the conqueror of the Turks and the Poles, he will at leaſt, in his haggard and ferocious eyes, his foaming and horrid mouth, readily diſcern the butcher of the inhabitants of Prague. Suvarof would be conſidered as the moſt ridiculous buffoon, if he had not ſhewn himſelf the moſt barbarous warrior. He is a monſter, with the body of an ape and the ſoul of a bull-dog. Attila, his countryman, and from whom he is perhaps deſcended, had neither his good fortune nor his ferocity. His groſs and ridiculous manners have inſpired his ſoldiers with the blindeſt confidence, which ſerves him inſtead of military talents, and has been the real cauſe of all his ſucceſſes. He is accounted a brave and ſucceſsful warrior;

that,

that, educated in camps, is unacquainted with the court, and ignorant how to flatter and fawn on a favorite. After having diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a ſubaltern, he advanced ſtep by ſtep to the rank of commander in chief. He is endowed with a natural ferocity, which ſerves him for bravery, and ſpills blood, like a tiger, by inſtinct. He lives in the army like a ſimple Coſſac: he arrives at court like an ancient Scythian; and, during his ſtay, will accept no other lodging than the carriage which brought him. To relate the details of his life would be to record a ſeries of extravagancies; and certainly if he be not mad, the ability to counterfeit madneſs is among the firſt of his qualifications, but his folly is the folly of a barbarian, which has nothing agreeable in it.

He has not, however, been always ſucceſsful. At the ſiege of Otchakof, the

the Turks having made a feigned fortie, he chofe, contrary to the orders of Potemkin, to purfue them, hoping to enter the city with the fugitives. A battery of mortars was opened upon him, and his whole column deftroyed. He entered upon the affault of Ifmaïl without having reconnoitred the place*, and his exploits in Poland are thofe of a brigand. He haftened his march thither to fatisfy the vengeance of Catharine, and to maffacre the remains of an army already

* He ufually announced his fuccefs in two or three words, and frequently in a couple of bad burlefque Ruffian verfes. Cæfar wrote to the fenate, *Veni, vidi, vici*. Suvarof might with propriety be more concife by one-third than Cæfar, for he always conquered without feeing. He faid himfelf: "Kamenfkoi knows "war, but war knows nothing of him: I do not "know her, but fhe knows me: as to J. Soltikof, he "neither knows her nor is known by her." A few fuch traits, and a few happy quotations of ancien hiftory, have given Suvarof reputation. His partifans reported that he frequently fhut himfelf up to ftudy the dead languages, and even Hebrew. French and German he fpeaks tolerably.

 defeated

defeated by Fresen, and deprived of the brave Kosciuszko, its principal strength. Suvarof, embracing the inhabitants of Warsaw, and granting them pardon on the bodies of twenty thousand citizens of every age and sex, resembles a satiated tiger that plays with his prey on the bones of his charnel-house.

The singularity of his manners is as striking as the eccentricity of his mind. He retires to rest at six in the evening, and rises at two in the morning, when he bathes himself in cold water, or causes pails of water to be thrown over his naked body. He dines at eight, and his dinner, like his breakfast, consists of the coarsest and commonest food of the soldiers, and brandy: a man trembles to be invited to such a repast. Often, in the middle of the entertainment, one of his *aides-de-camp* rises; and, approaching him, forbids him to eat any more. "By "whose

"whoſe order am I forbidden?" demands Suvarof.—"By order of marſhal Su-"varof himſelf," anſwers the aide-de-camp. Suvarof, riſing, then ſays, "He muſt be obeyed." In the ſame manner he cauſes himſelf to be commanded in his own name to walk or to do any other neceſſary thing.

During his ſtay at Warſaw, a crowd of Auſtrian or Pruſſian officers preſſed to ſee this original. Before he made his appearance, he inquired of which of theſe officers there was the greateſt number; if Auſtrians, he decorated himſelf with a portrait of Joſeph II. entered his antichamber, leaping into the middle of the circle, and offered to each of them the picture to kiſs, repeating, "Your "emperor knows me, and loves me alſo." If Pruſſians compoſed the majority, he wore the order of the Black Eagle, and made the ſame grimaces. At court, he

is ſometimes ſeen to run from lady to lady, and kiſs the portrait of Catharine which they wear at the breaſt, croſſing himſelf, and bowing. Catharine told him one day to behave himſelf more decently.

He is a devotee, and ſuperſtitious. He obliges his captains to pray aloud before their companies; and ill treats thoſe foreign officers or Livonians who are unacquainted with the Ruſſian prayers.

Sometimes he viſits the hoſpitals of the camp, calling himſelf a phyſician. Thoſe whom he finds extremely ill he obliges to take rhubarb or ſalts, and on thoſe who are but ſlightly indiſpoſed, he beſtows blows. Often he drives all the ſick from the hoſpital, ſaying, "It "is not permitted to the ſoldiers of Su-"varof to be ſick." In his armies, all thoſe

thofe manœuvres are prohibited which relate to a retreat, as he fhall never, he fays, have occafion to adopt them. He exercifes his foldiers himfelf, and makes them charge with the bayonet in three different ways. When he fays, "March "againft the Poles," the foldier plunges his bayonet once; "March againft the "Pruffians," the foldier ftrikes twice; "March againft the execrable French," the foldier then makes two thrufts forward, and a third in the ground, and there finks and turns round his bayonet. His hatred againft the French was extreme. His letter to Charette has been feen in various newfpapers. He wrote to Catharine from Warfaw, and frequently in thefe words: "Mother, "permit me to march againft the "French." When the death of Catharine took place, he had already advanced for that purpofe into Gallicia at the head of forty thoufand men.

Fre-

Frequently he rides through his camp, naked to his ſhirt, on the bare back of a Coſſac horſe; and at day-break, inſtead of cauſing the drums to beat the *reveille* he comes out of his tent, and crows three times like a cock, which is the ſignal for the army to riſe, ſometimes to march, or even to go to battle.

In the multiplicity of extravagances which he commits, or of inſipid things which he ſays, if any ſingular or ſtriking trait falls from him, every one repeats and admires it as a burſt of genius. This man has nevertheleſs ſome virtues: he has ſhewn occaſionally an uncommon diſintereſtedneſs, and even generoſity, as well in refuſing the gifts of Catharine as in diſtributing them about him. He will ſlaughter the wretch who aſks life, but he will give money to him who aſks charity. Almoſt at the ſame moment he gnaſhes his teeth in rage like a madman,

laughs

laughs and grins like an ape, or weeps piteoufly like an old woman.

Such is the too celebrated Suvarof. He quarrelled with his wife, and would not acknowledge a fon whom he had by her, preferring his nephews, the princes Gortfchakof: but the emprefs having made this fon an officer in the guards, he faid, "As the emprefs chufes "I fhall have a fon, be it fo; but for "myfelf, I know nothing of the mat-"ter." He had alfo a daughter, maid of honor to Catharine, who was diftinguifhed at court for idiotifm. Her father, after an abfence of feveral years, appointed a meeting with her at the houfe of a third perfon. "Ah, father," cried fhe, "how big you have grown "fince I faw you." In French, this would have paffed for a happy play upon words, but in Rufs it was a blunder that excited univerfal laughter.

After the capture of Warſaw, he repaired to Peterſburg to enjoy the fruits of his glory; and this Scythian, who had never before any other lodging than his carriage, accepted apartments in the Taurique palace, and wore a ſuperb marſhal's uniform, which was given him by Catharine. When he received this dreſs, he played a thouſand antics, hugging it in his arms, kiſſing it, and making ſigns of the croſs; and when he lifted it, he ſaid, "I am not aſtoniſhed they do not "give ſuch a dreſs as this to little Nicho-"las Soltikof; it would be too heavy for "him to wear*."

We have ſeen the manner in which Paul diſmiſſed him on his acceſſion, and the motives which inſtigated him. The murmurs of the army afterwards obliged the emperor to recal him.

* Nicholas Soltikof was one of thoſe moſt hurt by the promotion of Suvarof.

Valerian

Valerian Zubof, brother to the favorite, commanded the army which acted in Persia. Mention has before been made of this young libertine, who is naturally of a frank, honest, and courageous disposition, but has been corrupted by favor. He had lost a leg in Poland, and was on crutches when he went to conquer Asia*. One of his couriers arrived at the moment of the death of Catharine, with the account of a battle. Paul sent him ribands of the order of St. Anne to distribute among his officers, and to each of the colonels a private order to lead their regiments to the frontiers. The general remained behind in his camp, without knowing what he was to do. He afterwards followed his army,

* At the news of his wound, Catharine sent him her own surgeon, the riband of the order of St. Andrew, the rank of general in chief, and 100,000 rubles (10,000*l.*) to defray the expense of his cure. He demanded 500,000 (50,000*l.*) more, to pay his debts.

and

and on his arrival at Peterſburg gave in his reſignation. He reſides at preſent in Courland, where he poſſeſſes almoſt the entire domains of the ancient dukes.

From generals of ſuch character, and armies at a diſtance from court, and ignorant of what was paſſing there, nothing could be apprehended. The only corps which Paul had really to fear was the guards: for a long time theſe four numerous regiments, commanded by the firſt nobility in the empire, had viewed with alarm the approaching reign of the grand-duke, and regarded his acceſſion as the term of their exiſtence. Paul did not even conceal his averſion for them; and the ſevereſt reproach which he could uſe to his officers, and even to his ſoldiers, at the reviews of Gatſhina and Pavlofsky, was, "Thou "art fit for nothing but to ſerve in the "guards." Theſe troops repaid him in turn

turn the contempt he affected, and, by way of ridicule, beſtowed on his ſoldiers the epithet of "*Pruſſaki*, or Pruſſians." It is beyond a doubt, that with theſe dangerous ſucceſſors of the ſtrelitzes, a ſlighter cauſe than the tears of an Elizabeth, or the careſſing attentions of a Catharine, would have ſerved to excite them to mutiny. Paul did not think himſelf in ſecurity till he had diſtributed, as we have ſeen, his own battalions in theſe formidable regiments, careſſed the ſoldiers, and deprived the old officers of their commiſſions. But it was to little purpoſe that he laviſhed on them rubles and brandy: theſe acts of generoſity gained only thoſe who were near his perſon, while the army complained and murmured*.

Paul,

* Peter I. had aboliſhed the ſtrelitzy (archers), but their ſpirit revived in the four regiments of guards, who ſupplied their place. The guards, conſiſting of picked men, whoſe officers were taken from the wealthieſt families,

Paul, as grand-duke, hated and despiſed by his mother, humbled by the favorites, ridiculed by the courtiers, living in ſolitude, and almoſt forgotten under a brilliant reign, and preſerving the moſt regular and auſtere manners in the midſt of a corrupt and debauched court*, required few amiable qualities or virtues to make his ſituation pitied by men of underſtanding, and his reign wiſhed for by the people. He ought to have been expected as a deliverer: he was, however, generally feared as a ſcourge: his domeſtics, his officers, his courtiers, his

milies (1), formed an army of near ten thouſand men around the throne. The influence of this body was ſufficient to effect a revolution, and indeed alone accompliſhed all that have taken place ſince Peter I.

* This is a piece of juſtice that muſt not be denied him; and if his attachment to the Nelidof have made him neglect his wife, it has not made him offend againſt decency or decorum in public, hitherto at leaſt. The Nelidof, however, is diſmiſſed.

(1) To be an officer in the guards, a man muſt prove that he poſſeſſed at leaſt a hundred peaſants or ſlaves.

favorites,

favorites, and even his children, dreadful to relate, partook more or lefs of thefe horrid fentiments. The fufpicion he entertained, that he infpired thefe fentiments, doubtlefs exafperated him, and perhaps rendered him incapable of correcting them; but with this character, the traits of juftice and goodnefs which fometimes appear in him, are more ftriking, and occafion a deeper regret for thofe qualities which might have been expected in him.

Before his acceffion, his favor was dreaded: befide its often exciting the refentment of the emprefs and the favorite, it was confidered as the fame fign of difgrace as fine weather is proverbially regarded as the conftant forerunner of rain. No man has ever fhewn more eccentricity and ficklenefs in the felection of his friends. At firft, he opened himfelf with unbounded confidence

and

and entire familiarity to the perſon who appeared to enter into his views; then, repenting this frankneſs, he regarded his friend as a dangerous character, perhaps the creature of his mother or of the favorite, who had flattered him only to betray him. Beſide thoſe on whom the ſlighteſt attentions of his wife, or the kindneſſes of Benkendorf, cauſed the ſtorms of his anger to fall, the empire ſwarmed with his baniſhed domeſtics, diſgraced favorites, and caſhiered officers: it invariably happened, that he who had been neareſt his perſon had moſt reaſon to complain, and he who had received moſt favors found himſelf in the end moſt unfortunate.

Having given ſome account of the miniſters of Catharine, it will not be improper ſhortly to ſpeak of the courtiers who were in favor with Paul on his acceſſion, and who will certainly

continue

continue in favor for ſome time. It may be ſaid with truth, in their praiſe and in his, that the majority of thoſe miniſters are more diſintereſted, and abler ſtateſmen, than thoſe of the old court.

The two princes Kourakin, who alternately have been in favor and diſgrace with Paul*, are the two men, next to the valet-

* Alexis Kourakin had frequently been in diſgrace with Paul on account of the attention and regard he always paid the grand-ducheſs; but the ill-humor of Paul on this ſcore muſt not be aſcribed to jealouſy, which his character and that of his wife did not allow. Paul's ill-humor aroſe from political ſuſpicions, not from love. One day, obſerving his wife ſpeak low by the fire-ſide to prince Kourakin, he fell into a paſſion, and ſaid to her, "Madam, you want to "make yourſelf friends, and prepare to act the part "of Catharine, but be aſſured you ſhall not find in "me a Peter III." Theſe inconſiderate expreſſions, which eſcaped from him in his rage, alarmed every one, and Kourakin withdrew from court. From that period the grand-ducheſs was more unhappy, and under ſtill

valet-de-chambre I have mentioned, who poſſeſs moſt influence, and perhaps they are perſons moſt deſerving of it. Before the death of Catharine, though powerful and rich, their employments were inſignificant: one of them led a retired life, amuſing himſelf with the cultivation of the arts and ſciences, or the education of his children, and was generally reſpected and eſteemed. His manners and habits of life were very different from thoſe of the greater part of the Ruſſian nobility, who diſſipate their time and fortunes in vices of every kind, in gaming, in luxury, and other follies. In a

ſtill greater reſtraint. The leaſt meſſage could not be ſent to her without permiſſion of her huſband. He named thoſe who were to offer her their arm for a walk, to make her evening party, or even to converſe with her in the courſe of the evening. At length he found it more commodious to give her a ſort of cicisbeo, who was never to quit her. Prince Neſwitſky was the man whom he deemed inſignificant enough for this office.

word,

word, he appeared worthy to be at the head of affairs, and he now holds that ſtation with his brother; the one being vice-chancellor of the empire, and the other attorney-general: to them muſt be attributed whatever is right in the conduct of affairs.

Two young chamberlains, who fortunately were in the ſervice of Paul when the couriers arrived with the intelligence of the death of Catharine, were ſuddenly metamorphoſed into generals of the army, and became his firſt *aides-de-camp.* One is M. Raſtaptſchin, who owes his favor to a very ingenious letter, and who, to preſerve it, muſt renounce three-fourths of his underſtanding, and one-half of himſelf*. The other is a young count Schuvalof, whom Paul had recently taken into favor, after having long neg-

* He has already been twice diſmiſſed, and recalled.

lected him; and to whom he presented one of his own dreſſes, to ſerve as a model for the horſe-guards, of which he appointed him major. The young man appeared at court in this habit, as if in a ſack; and doubtleſs found himſelf much at his eaſe in it. Nothing can be more ſingular than the equal favor of theſe young perſons, ſince it would appear that the favor of the one was ſufficient to cauſe the diſgrace of the other. Mr. Raſtaptſchin, ſome years ago, was gentleman in waiting to the grand-duke at Pavlofsky. His young aſſociates, and, among others, count Schuvalof and prince Baratinſky, conſidering their employments as a difficult and hazardous ſervice, becauſe a word ſpoken to the grand-ducheſs, or a coat too faſhionably cut, was ſufficient to ruin them, abſented themſelves as often as poſſible, feigning ſickneſs, or alleging ſome other excuſe. Raſtaptſchin, tired in

in his turn with not being relieved, wrote a ſharp letter to the marſhal of the court, in which he rallied his aſſociates on the true motives which detained them at Pavlofsky; adding, at the concluſion, "For my own part, who "have no diſeaſe to cure, nor a fair "Italian ſinger to maintain, I will cheer- "fully continue to perform their duty "to the grand-duke." Theſe ſtrokes of ſatire were aimed at Schuvalof as well as at Baratinſky, whom Paul, though his relation, could not bear. The marſhal ſhewed this letter to the empreſs, who at firſt laughed at it; but Schuvalof and Baratinſky, thinking they had reaſon to be offended, required an explanation from Raſtaptſchin. The affair made a noiſe: Baratinſky was ſent to the army, and Raſtaptſchin was baniſhed from the court for a year. From that time the grand-duke regarded him as his champion, and

 obſti-

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

obſtinately refuſed to accept the attendance of the other gentlemen in waiting, unleſs he was recalled; and accordingly, for more than a year, though they regularly came to Pavlofsky or Gatſhina to offer their ſervices, they were as regularly diſmiſſed.

Among the favorites of the emperor, M. Pleſchtſcheief is a real phenomenon: he is the only one who has always kept himſelf at the ſame diſtance. It is true, he has never ranked in the firſt claſs of favorites; but it is alſo true, that he has always been exempt from ſtorms. He is a man well-informed and reſpectable. He ſpeaks ſeveral languages, poſſeſſes ſome knowledge of geography and government, and cultivates literature. He might even be of ſervice to Ruſſia, if, among his good qualities, he could reckon that of courage to ſpeak the truth;

truth; but unfortunately his conſtant enjoyment of favor ſeems almoſt a moral proof of the contrary *.

M. Nieledinſky, who had been the companion of the ſtudies and amuſements of Paul, was diſtinguiſhed at Peterſburg for great extent of capacity, and had acquired reputation by ſome love ſonnets not deficient in grace and ſentiment. The emperor has appointed him his private ſecretary, but on condition, no doubt, that he ſtrangles his muſe, who has ſerved him, however, too well to deſerve ſo cruel a death. It is at leaſt to be wiſhed, that Nieledinſky may exhibit and practiſe the ſenſibility which he diſplays in his verſes. His office is to give an account of the letters and petitions that are addreſſed to the emperor: the fate

* He alſo has at laſt been diſgraced, and with circumſtances of great cruelty.

of

of numerous oppreſſed individuals is accordingly in his hands.

M. Nicolai came into Ruſſia as governor to the young counts Razumofsky, who afterwards were his protectors. On the recommendation of Mrs. Pretorius, his relation, waiting-maid to the ducheſs of Wirtemburg, he was placed near the grand-ducheſs in quality of ſecretary: he was created a baron in Germany, during the travels of the grand-duke, and became, on his acceſſion, counſellor of ſtate, director of the emperor's cabinet*, knight of the order of St. Anne, and received ſome hundreds of peaſants†. He comes from

* What is called the *cabinet* in Ruſſia is not a council of ſtate; it is the room which contains the treaſures, jewels, and private curioſities of the ſovereign.

† He had before an eſtate in Finland, a province ceded by Sweden, where the peaſants are not completely reduced to the ſame mode of ſlavery as the Ruſſians;

from Straſbourg, and is known in Germany by ſome imitations of Arioſto, and other poems agreeable enough, though extremely verboſe. He alſo has been obliged to ſacrifice his muſe on the altar of fortune; to which, ungrateful as he is, ſhe had herſelf conducted him. I do not know if the political haughtineſs, which he thinks himſelf obliged to maintain, render him more happy, but it does not at leaſt give him the appearance of it.

ſians; and Nicolaï frequently complained of it, ſaying, "Theſe wretches ſcarcely bring me in anything, "and pretend to have rights." Thoſe, whom he has juſt received, are in Poland, where he may do with them as he pleaſes, ſeparate them, ſell them, or make them work, like domeſtic animals, to embelliſh his gardens. From this anecdote the reader may judge what this Straſburger is become in Ruſſia, who paſſes n Germany for a philoſopher, and whom ſo many ſcribblers flatter as a Macænas. If he read this, no doubt he will admire the moderation with which he is mentioned.

M. Da-

M. Danorof, late librarian to the prince of Wirtemburg, and ſince aide-de-camp to Paul, has alſo become an important perſonage: but I abſtain from ſpeaking in detail of thoſe with whom I am not ſufficiently acquainted to form an adequate judgment of their merits. I will only remark, that in the liſt of preferments which the emperor has ſince made, I obſerve a number of perſons deſerving no other portion than the contempt and vengeance of the public.

Meanwhile it is apparent, that the perſons who approach Paul are morally better than thoſe who had acceſs to his mother*. He is ſurrounded by men of inform-

* The following piece of pleaſantry will ſhew the opinion entertained of moſt of the perſons in place and in favor at the court of Catharine. It occurred in a company where twelfth-day was kept in the French manner, and where the king of the night was deſired to

information, and even of merit. I ſay he

to diſpoſe of the courtiers according to their talents and capacity.

" Zubof has never rendered any ſervice to the " ſtate, and is no longer of ſervice to the empreſs, ſince " the Sapphies, Branicka, and Protaſof, execute the " functions of his office. Let a few emetics be given " to him, to make him bring up what he has ſwal- " lowed; and then let him be ſent to the baths of Bal- " dona for the recovery of his health.

" Count N. Soltikof, preſident of the college of war, " and governor of the grand-dukes, is named preſi- " dent of the college of phyſicians, and deacon of the " imperial chapel. He may likewiſe retain the wa- " ter-cloſet of the young princes, provided he ſhut up " his wife in a convent, or ſend her to Bridewell.

" Count Beſborodko, chief counſellor of ſtate, &c. " ſhall be appointed cook to the court; unleſs he " had rather be director of the Lock Hoſpital for fe- " males, in which he will find all his friends.

" Vice-chancellor Oſtermann ſhall repair to St. " Denis, to replace the ſword of Charlemagne, long " and flat as himſelf.

" Prince Baratinſky, marſhal of the court, ſhall " be appointed Jack Ketch. A more gentle mode of " putting to death, than that by the knout, is in- " tended,

he *is*, when perhaps I ought to ſay he *was*;

" tended to be introduced; and he ſhall have the of-
" fice of ſmothering and ſtrangling in ſecret thoſe that
" are wanted to be diſpatched, whether it be an em-
" peror or his ſon: it is expected, however, that he do
" not let them cry out, as he did about thirty years
" ago.

" Marſhal Suvarof ſhall have a patent for dealing
" as a butcher in human fleſh; and the army ſhall
" be allowed to feed on it in Poland, where nothing
" but carcaſes are left.

" A committee of *outſhiteli* (tutors) ſhall be ap-
" pointed to examine whether prince Yuſſupof be
" able to read; if he can, he ſhall be appointed
" prompter to the theatres, of which he is now ma-
" nager.

" Markof ſhall be ſent ambaſſador to Paris, where
" he has been already ſo ſucceſsful. It is hoped, that
" he will be the proper man to effect a reconciliation
" between Ruſſia and the French republic, ſince he
" has been the ſcourge of the Ruſſian and Poliſh jaco-
" bins, againſt whom it alſo has declared war.

" Samoïlof, attorney-general, ſhall be made one of
" the chevalier guards, for he is a tolerably hand-
" ſome man, which is a ſufficient qualification for that
" poſt.

" Kon-

was; for his ficklenefs difplays itfelf on every

" Kontufof, director of the corps of cadets in the " room of the worthy count of Anhalt, fhall erect " a monument to his predeceffor, whom he ftudies to ri- " dicule, and whom he makes us regret every day. " His conduct, however, is the beft panegyric on the " memory of the worthy Anhalt.

" The corps of artillery fhall remain with the " old general Meliffino, becaufe he is the only general " in that body who underftands his trade: but on con- " dition, that he fhall not have the management of the " cheft, and he do not expofe his gray hair in the " antichamber of the valets of the court. He is re- " quefted likewife to employ lefs artifice in his con- " duct, and lefs fmoke in his artifices.

" Madame von Lieven, governefs to the princeffes, " fhall retain her place, though fhe has fomewhat " the air of an Amazon; but the time will come when " it will not be amifs to give young princeffes a little " of a military air (1).

" Countefs Shuvalof, grand-miftrefs to the grand- " duchefs Elizabeth, fhall likewife be confirmed; but " fhe fhall be enjoined not to let beafts only have " permiffion to fpeak at the table of that young prin- " cefs, unlefs they fpeak with fenfe, as they did in " Æfop's days.

(1) This time is arrived.

" Prince

everything about him, and he does not permit merit to remain a ſufficient time at his court to be corrupted*.

The prince, whom Paul appears to have choſen for the prototype of his

" Prince Repnin, having opened the door one day
" when prince Potemkin called for a glaſs of water,
" that he might himſelf repeat this important order
" to the lackeys, ſhall receive a patent for the place of
" firſt valet-de-chambre to the favorites; a poſt which
" to him will be worth that of field-marſhal. How-
" ever, the crown of laurel which covered his gray
" hair ſhall be taken from him, becauſe he ſuffered
" a buffoon to trample on him without ſaying a word;
" and becauſe the gift of a ſmall houſe appeared ſuit-
" ed to him, and to conſole him for the inſult.

" M. Zavadofsky, director and plunderer of the
" bank, ſhall be ſent into Siberia to catch ſables, to re-
" pleniſh her majeſty's ſtock of furs, which it will not
" long be in her power to keep up by any other means.
" She is already unable to furniſh her family with
" them, and Zavadofsky is well known to be a better
" huntſman than financier," &c.

* This has taken place. The princes Kourakin, and moſt of thoſe whom I have named, are in diſgrace at the moment of my writing this.

reign

reign and his actions, is Frederic William, father of the great king of Prussia *. The same austerity of manners, and the same passion for soldiers, are found in the Russian autocrate. For the rest, I have drawn, I conceive, the character of Paul in relating his actions; if not, the task, I confess, is above my powers. It is well known, that nothing is so difficult to paint as an infant, whose physiognomy is as yet unsettled, and it is the same with the character of an eccentric man. The most favorable plea we can make for him is, that the light of the French revolution has touched his brain, and disordered his intellects. It had already disturbed the much stronger head of his mother. It is said, that the people of Paris, crowding to see Paul, then a youth, cried, " My God, how ugly he is !" and

* This he does not allow; for he said one day, " I " will be Frederic II. in the morning, and Louis XIV. " at night."

that he had the good ſenſe to laugh at it*. He is not improved ſince he is grown old, bald, and wrinkled. The empreſs appears by his ſide like one of thoſe beautiful women who are painted with a little deformed blackamoor near them, as a contraſt to their dignity and grace. The ſingularity which he affects in his dreſs, and the ſeverity of his manners, add greatly to his deformity. Without excepting even the Kalmuks and the Kirghiſes, Paul is the ugliest man in his extenſive dominions; and he himſelf conſiders his countenance as ſo

* He is greatly changed; or rather, he now dares ſhew himſelf what perhaps he was already. A poor ſoldier, in the agony of his ſufferings under the cane by Paul's orders for a trifling fault in his exerciſe, cried out in deſpair, "Curſed baldhead! curſed bald-"head!" The enraged autocrate gave orders that he ſhould expire under the knout; and iſſued a proclamation, by which it was prohibited, under pain of the ſame puniſhment, for any one to make uſe of the term bald, in ſpeaking of the head, or ſnubbed, in ſpeaking of the noſe.

ſhocking,

ſhocking, that he dares not impreſs it upon his coin*.

I ſhall here ſubjoin ſome traits, which will ſerve to deſcribe Paul by his own actions; and will prove, that when grand-duke, he announced what we have ſeen of him ſince his acceſſion.

Near his caſtle of Pavlofsky he had a terrace, from which he could ſee all the

* The new coins have not his effigy, but his cypher merely, with the following words of ſcripture, which, in ſuch a connexion, have no meaning: "Not "unto us, not unto us, but to thy name." Probably it is ſome device of martiniſm, or of *obſcurantiſm*, which Paul patroniſes. It even appears, that he is going to eſtabliſh this order with that of Malta, of which, to the aſtoniſhment of all Europe, he has juſt declared himſelf grand-maſter, at the very inſtant of forming an alliance with the Turks. O my friends, can you refrain from laughter? But, alas!

Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi.

centinels,

centinels, whom he delighted to ſtation about him wherever there was room for a centry box. On this covered terrace he ſpent a part of each day, and obſerved with a ſpying-glaſs all that was paſſing about him. Often he ſent a ſervant to a centinel, to order him to button or unbutton a little more of his coat, to keep his muſket higher or lower, to walk at a greater or leſs diſtance from his centry box. Sometimes he would go himſelf nearly half a mile to give theſe important orders, and would cane the ſoldier, or put a ruble into his pocket, according as he was angry or pleaſed with him.

Pavlofsky was an open village, yet guards were appointed, who wrote down the names of all who entered it or went out of it, and who were obliged to tell whence they came, whither they were

going

going, or what they wanted. Every evening each houſe was viſited, to learn if there were any ſtrangers there. Every man who wore a round hat, or had a dog with him, was arreſted. The village, which had been much frequented becauſe of its beautiful ſituation, ſoon became a deſert; perſons turned out of their way to avoid it; and when Paul was perceived at a diſtance, he was carefully ſhunned. Theſe circumſtances increaſed his diſpleaſure and ſuſpicions, and he often cauſed the perſons, who thus ſought to avoid him, to be purſued and queſtioned.

One day he put all the officers of his battalion under arreſt, becauſe they had ſaluted him awkwardly in filing off after their drill, and he ordered them to be called out for eight days ſucceſſively to file off and ſalute before him, ſending them

them regularly back to the guard-houſe till they were able to perform according to his fancy.

Exerciſing one day his regiment of cuiraſſiers, the horſe of an officer threw him. Paul ran furiouſly towards him, crying, "Get up, raſcal."—"Your highneſs, I "cannot, I have broken my leg." Paul ſpat upon him, and retired ſwearing.

Paſſing at another time unexpectedly and ſecretly by one of his guard-houſes, the officer, not knowing him, did not order out his men: upon which he inſtantly turned back, boxed the ears of the officer, and ordered him to be diſarmed, and put under arreſt.

One day, travelling from Tzarſko-ſelo to Gatſhina, of which the road was in the middle of a marſhy foreſt, he ſuddenly

denly recollected ſomething, and ordered the coachman to return. "Preſently, "your highneſs," ſaid the coachman; "the road is here too narrow."—"How, "raſcal," cried Paul, "wont you turn "immediately." The coachman, inſtead of anſwering, haſtened to a ſpot where it was poſſible to comply: Paul, however, called to his equerry, and ordered him to arreſt and puniſh the rebellious coachman. The equerry aſſured him, that he would turn in a moment. Paul flew into a paſſion with the equerry alſo: "You are a pitiful ſcoundrel like "himſelf," ſaid he. "Let him overturn "the carriage, let him break my neck, "but let him obey me, and turn the "inſtant I command him." During the diſpute the coachman ſucceeded in turning, but Paul had him chaſtiſed on the ſpot.

Since

Since his acceſſion, one of his horſes ſtumbled with him in one of the ſtreets of Peterſburg: he alighted immediately, held a ſort of council with his attendants, and the horſe was condemned to receive fifty laſhes with a whip. Paul cauſed them to be given on the ſpot, before the populace, and counted himſelf the ſtrokes, ſaying, " There, Sir, that is for having " ſtumbled with the emperor."

One day, when only grand-duke, he met in the gardens a man with a round hat, who wiſhed to avoid him. Paul cauſed the man to be brought before him, and found that he was a clock-maker, who came to repair his time-keepers. After having at great length remonſtrated with him on the indecency of round hats, he aſked his wife for ſome pins, and raiſing the flaps of the hat, cocked it himſelf, and then

then replaced it upon the head of its owner.

To balance this multitude of abſurdities, he exhibits many traits of humanity: the penſions which he has beſtowed on the unfortunate, the hoſpitals which he has founded for his ſoldiers, the proviſions which he diſtributes among his poor officers, and other acts of benevolence and juſtice, atteſt that he deſerves the character rather of a capricious than a bad man.

END OF VOL. I.

C. WHITTINGHAM, Printer,
Dean Street, Fetter Lane, London.